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THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. MARITIME POWER IN THE PACIFIC

BY

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This analysis examines the evolving contexts of U.S. maritime power in the Asia-Pacific region. It assesses its historical growth, changes as the result of major geopolitical shifts, and the impact of both the Cold War and Post-Cold War periods. Special emphasis is put on the ways the Post-Cold War era is affecting, and may influence, U.S. strategy generally and with special reference to naval power. It also examines the ways in which Asian maritime power affects the geopolitical circumstances of the region and, in turn, the United States' strategy in the region.

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THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. MARITIME POWER IN THE PACIFIC
(E.A. Olsen)

Before the Pacific was a gleam in the eye of American or other Western seafaring nations, bent on commercial or geopolitical ambitions, the waters off Asia were the domain of several indigenous seafaring states. These included premodern regimes in Japan, the East Indies, Malaya, and Indochina. Although these early states became moderately important locally based on their proficiency at sea, none of them spread their influence very wide regionally via seapower. Asian history is marked, instead, by two major continentalist powers, China and India. To be sure, both extended their zones of cultural and political influence by sea, as well as land, but neither were notably expansionist. Moreover, their sea-borne influence was marginal to their continental presence. Instead, they functioned as mainland Asian magnets drawing outsiders to them, or into their orbit, by virtue of their attractions. Thus, the historical dynamics of Asia, prior to the advent of Westerners, were much less dependent upon seapower than was true of Europe and the regions in which Europeans settled.

When Western seafarers first made their way to Asia, following the lures described and exaggerated by earlier overland travelers, they went in search of greatness and wealth in certain more advanced civilizations. In time, however, this changed dramatically, as Western societies advanced materially and key Asian societies remained on a relative plateau. Over the decades Western seapower became the main instrument of Western imperialism, spreading European power and influence through what

(from the westernmost peninsulas of Eurasia) was considered the Near, Middle, and Far East. The most powerful European rivalries found expression in Asia as the British, French, Dutch, and Portuguese spread their reach from their homelands through seapower. Only the Czarist Russians relied primarily on continental expansionism, using seapower around the fringes of empire.

American Role

Americans were decided latecomers to all this. After the Revolutionary War, Americans found themselves free of the British Navigation Acts which had restricted their overseas trade options. At the same time, however, a British "Order in Council," of 2 July 1783, prohibited American access to markets in the West Indies. These concurrent developments led Americans to seek new markets, and they looked especially to the Orient. Led by the Empress of China, out of New York (in 1783), this created a thriving trade between the Northeast U.S. coast and China. When Americans appeared on the East Asian scene as ex-colonials from the New World, they were small parts of a larger scheme which they did not control. Nor did they exert much influence upon that system. Nonetheless, many of them prospered in ways that whetted their appetite both for complete American trade autonomy and for a larger American share of the riches Asia offered to the West. Consequently, the American stake in Asia across the far Pacific to their West is not a modern phenomenon. It is virtually as old as the United States.

It is for this reason that one can say, despite its relatively late arrival, that the United States has a long maritime tradition in the

Pacific. From the age of far-flung American merchant ships under sail (the late-1700s to mid-1800s) to the massive carrier groups of the 1990s, American vessels have made their presence known in Asia-Pacific waters. That span of years and diversity of ships marked an evolutionary process that continues unabated. As the United States faces the 21st century from the vantage point as the preeminent naval power in the contemporary world, and to some Americans as a unipolar power,[1] it is worth assessing the nature of the evolution of U.S. maritime power in the Pacific and analyzing the prospects for U.S. Naval power in the Pacific in the coming century.

Although most Americans have tended to be oriented toward Europe throughout U.S. history, because of cultural ties to the "old country" and the preeminence of Europe in world affairs, that did not prevent the development of important commercial links between Americans and Asians. The China clipper trade routes of the 1840s were major maritime avenues for American business.[2] Those vessels, in turn, sought safety as they plied the Pacific. The U.S. Navy's initial limited abilities to help fend for the American merchant fleet compelled merchants to fend for themselves and, whenever possible, take advantage of the protection afforded to American merchant vessels by the freedom of the seas maintained by the Royal Navy. Americans did not have a choice regarding a world dominated by Pax Britannica; it was the ineluctable global context of the day. Thus, despite the animosities of immediate post-revolutionary war years, Americans retained a de facto Anglophone orientation in Pacific trade routes. This is not to say that British and American merchantmen were partners in exploiting the "riches of the

East," for in fact they were competitors. Nonetheless, as English speakers from an upstart new nation, the Americans gravitated toward the fringes of the patterns established by their British predecessors. This meant that they had little access in South Asian areas solidly controlled by the British Empire, but were able to follow in the wake of that Empire's merchants and navy in Far Eastern regions of Asia where no single power dominated. In effect, the early American merchantmen in Asia were classic free-riders on the fringes of the British Empire. This relative regional emphasis established a pattern which persists to this day, in which Americans show far more interest in Eastern Asia than in Southern Asia, with Southeast Asia falling in between.

As the United States grew, however, and the numbers of American merchant vessels traversing the Pacific also expanded, this created a need for the U.S. Navy to increase its ability to provide protection for the private merchant fleet. Thus, it is important to note, in light of 20th century developments, that the U.S. Navy did not lead the way into the Pacific in order to provide stable conditions for American commerce, but was, instead, drawn into the region in order to secure such conditions for already established American commercial interests. In other words, the flag followed trade. Following this sequence of events it is interesting to note that the U.S. Navy, which had cut its teeth in two struggles against the Royal Navy (i.e., the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812), nonetheless had to follow a course which the fledgling U.S. merchant marine had established. The U.S. Navy was at that time far too small to even think about providing "freedom of the seas" for the American

merchant vessels. Moreover, that role was the self-proclaimed mission of the Royal Navy which clearly ruled the waves in all areas of the world where the Empire's influence was felt. Since the American merchant fleet was still free-riding in the shadows of the British Empire when the U.S. Navy started to show the U.S. flag, it became natural for the American Navy to also follow in their wake. Thus, without any foreordained plan, the United States Navy began to play roles which supported the overall free-riding desires of American merchantmen. This meant that, in effect, the U.S. Navy played a supplementary role in the wake of the Royal Navy whenever the commercial interests of the United States and the British Empire overlapped. This pattern was intensified by the relative ease of American commercial penetration in areas where British speakers of English had already blazed a trail and where the indigenous peoples scarcely understood the difference between British and Americans, and to whom they looked and sounded alike.

This defacto supporting role was the general pattern, but from the earliest days of American naval involvement in Asia the United States Navy carved out specific missions for itself as the Navy engaged in rescues and limited flag-showing operations. These grew in scope, magnitude, and number throughout the mid-19th century. Although the U.S. Navy was still dwarfed by the Royal Navy and clearly understood the latters' primacy, American warships carved out a much larger role in defense of U.S. commercial interests in the Pacific. By far the best example of this new assertiveness was the role played in July 1853 by Commodore Perry's Eastern Squadron in the U.S. intervention into Japan's

sakoku (closed country) policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate.[3] By that point in American involvement in Asian affairs, the United States had become a genuine, if small, commercial and naval presence in the region. Although a rival of the British and other empires, the Americans nonetheless looked upon their British counterparts as mentors of sorts. While the United States had not yet developed imperial ambitions, American commercial and naval protagonists in the region clearly wanted for the United States some of the rewards which pursuit of empire had earned for the British. So, even though they lacked a formal imperial game plan, Americans followed the British examples. When it benefitted the Americans commercially and militarily, they were free-riders upon the Empire. When they saw opportunities to strike out on their own and get an edge on the European competition, they did not hesitate to do so. The United States at that time behaved (in a different context) remarkably like some of the junior strategic partners in Asia which Americans complained about in the 1970s and '80s.

The United States' intervention into Japan's isolation originally had relatively modest motives, namely to protect U.S. merchant ships from dangers in Japan and to provide transit access enroute to China for resupply. Japan was not then considered a vital area for commercial penetration. China had been, and remained, the main lure for Westerners in Eastern Asia. Japan was an interesting sideshow to the main event. Hence, though Americans faced competition in Japan from the British and the Russians, everyone's main interests remained in China. This made it relatively easy for Americans to maximize the gains they made by being the

first to "open" Japan. Based on those advantages, the American commercial and naval presence in the Western Pacific began to assume true viability. Reinforced by territorial expansion into the mid-Pacific when Americans gradually absorbed Hawaii into U.S. domains from 1887-1900, and by the aquisition of a short-lived naval base in Samoa in 1878, the still young United States was enroute to becaming a Pacific country in ways that was not true of the major Western empires.[4] In that sense Americans saw themselves as pursuing national territorial interests rather than imperialist colonial interests. This may not have made any difference to those Asians and Pacific islanders on the receiving end of U.S. commercial and naval interests, but it mattered to Americans who -- while riding in the wake of imperialists and sometimes acting like them -- often considered themselves to have higher motives. This dichotomy was best displayed in 1899 when the United States pursued its "open door" policies vis-a-vis China. Ostensibly designed to help the Chinese remain free of domination by any single foreign power and to maximize free access to the "great China market," it would never have worked if it had not also served British imperial purposes. This was a clear example of the American flag, and a bold U.S. policy initiative, piggybacking on the presence of the dominant Western power in the region.[5]

New Horizons

Regardless of the exaggerated influence of the United States in the Pacific at a time when most Americans remained preoccupied with development of their vast continental domain, these distant developments whetted the American appetite for an expanded

horizon further west than the United States' Pacific coast. A sizeable minority of vocal Americans called for the creation of an imperial mandate for the United States that would put their country into the same leagues as those powers which dominated world affairs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[6] The Pacific, along with Latin American, seemed to be the most appropriate venues for this imperialist ambition. Two events accelerated these aspirations. The Spanish-American War created opportunities after 1898 for the United States to create a colony in the Pacific at the expense of the Philippines.[7] More abstractly, the United States also produced a theoretician for this burgeoning agenda. Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, from his vantage point at the Naval War College, became the U.S. Navy's most prominent theoretician of sea power by partially addressing his thesis to these contemporary issues in the Pacific.[8] Although most of Mahan's writings dealt with other regions, he was prescient in noting, "it may even be questioned whether sound military policy may not make the Pacific rather than the Atlantic the station for the United States battle fleet."[9]

This development proved to have profound implications for both the United States Navy as an institution and for the U.S. Navy as an instrument of American policy in the Pacific. Mahan reshaped the Navy's sense of itself and of its potentials versus the navies of other countries, notably the Royal Navy in whose shadow it had so long dwelled in the Pacific. As important, Mahan enhanced American understanding of the ability of U.S. seapower to transform the United States into a genuine major power that thought of itself primarily as a maritime power as compared to a continental power.

Mahan's writings exposed Americans to the diversity of their options. They could remain a growing continental state whose enormous inner strengths required off-shore naval defenses, or they could use continental strength to create a naval instrument capable of projecting American power and influence far afield. Admiral Mahan's writings guided the United States toward an appreciation for naval power which helped to transform the role of the United States in international affairs generally and in the Pacific, specifically.

When one looks back from the late 20th century at Mahan's influence upon the development of the U.S. Navy from 1890s to the early 20th century, it is too easy to cast him as a distant historical figure who is not considered by most contemporary Naval officers to be a major present-day influence on their profession. Virtually all U.S. Navy officers know who Mahan was, most have read excerpts from his classic tome, The Influence of Seapower Upon History, and many vaguely think of him the way they do John Paul Jones, as one of the U.S. Navy's "founding fathers." Nonetheless, Mahan usually is treated as a distinctly historical figure.[10]

For all of Mahan's quaintness in the nuclear age, his quest for an emphasis upon seapower within the international policy of the growing United States of his day bears a legacy which is often slighted by his professional descendents. Mahan was simultaneously a product of a fledgling imperialist phase in U.S. history and a booster for that phase. When Mahan argued for increased naval power, which would in turn sustain militarily the economic conditions for the support of sizeable naval forces, he advocated a

symbiotic relationship that was profoundly imperialist and mercantilist. Thus the expansion of U.S. naval power with which Mahan is identified, and which eventually put the U.S. Navy into the major leagues of global naval powers, had a distinct imperialist impetus.

The Mahanian thrust of U.S. imperialism in the Pacific quickly ran into the reality of running a colony in the Philippines. The transformation of the United States from a country which gloried in its anti-colonial revolutionary traditions into an active colonialist was not a simple one. Resistance to the change in policy was substantial and the sentiment in the U.S. Congress in favor of such a shift was paper thin. Nonetheless, as a territorially expansionist state which wondered what might replace its receding frontiers as an incentive for progress, in an age when international social Darwinism seemed logical, and when an imperialist balance of power constituted the rules of the game, enough Americans wanted a piece of the imperialist action for the United States, for them to carry the day in U.S. policy debates. The Spanish-American War and the opportunities it created in the Philippine islands for Americans to join in the "great game" at the turn of the century were too promising to pass up. Part and parcel of this era was the creation of what came to be known as "the Great White Fleet" that could demonstrate an American presence in the Pacific (1908) and the "carry a big stick" philosophy of Teddy Roosevelt which lay behind it.[11] In short, the then growing U.S. Navy came to symbolize a new degree of American swagger internationally.

U.S. Caution

The armed struggle against Philippine nationalists, in what Americans perceived as an insurrection but Filipinos accurately consider part of their revolutionary experience, quickly soured many Americans on the ineluctable by-products of imperialism. Americans wanted the fruits and status of being a major power in an imperialist age, but were much less willing to behave like ruthless imperialists. Although the United States prevailed over the less prepared Filipinos, the costs of doing so were high. In circumstances that in certain ways foreshadowed the "Vietnam syndrome" of the 1970s and '80s, the rigors of suppressing Filipinos took the edge off American desires for further imperialist exploits in the pre-Second World War period. American enthusiasm cooled further as the more powerful colonial powers in Asia, and certain non-colonized states (notably Japan), began to treat the United States differently. To be sure, through their imperialism Americans earned a place at the international table, that was enhanced by U.S. participation in the First World War, but it also generated suspicion of U.S. motives and cynicism about American claims to hewing to higher standards. As a consequence, the years leading up to the Second World War witnessed an equally dramatic partial reversal in U.S. policy. Americans reverted to their longstanding isolationist traditions in terms of focusing on domestic affairs while largely limiting foreign military entanglements. The three major exceptions to that general rule were: 1) recurring interventionism in Latin America (where the Monroe Doctrine guided American thinking and acting), 2) consistent interest in foreign trade opportunities that were considered

offshoots of domestic economic activities and not deemed "entanglements," and 3) the continued maintenance of sizeable naval forces.

The United States developed its navy based on one implied imperialist mentor-model as it rode in the wake of the Royal Navy, and on one explicitly imperialist vision developed by Admiral Mahan. Nonetheless, Washington facilely reordered its naval priorities as Americans rediscovered their isolationist/non-interventionist proclivities. As part of a general disillusionment with the efficacy of war, and the need to prepare for it perpetually, the American people experienced after the First World War what Harold and Margaret Sprout called a "popular revolt against navalism."[12] During the 1920s and '30s Americans decided that the best use for a navy which the United States had developed in order to join the imperialist club was, perversely, to help insulate the United States behind the natural oceanic walls it enjoyed. In short, the U.S. Navy that Mahan had advocated so that the United States could become a player in world affairs found its interwar purpose as a protector of American isolationism. In contrast to the U.S. Army which in the interwar years again reverted to the peacetime cadre status which had been normal for the United States prior to the post-World War Two creation of seemingly permanent large-scale standing forces, the U.S. Navy found a distinct -- if unwanted -- identity in the isolationist years of the 1920s and '30s. This proved easier in the Atlantic where the Royal Navy's strength buffered the East Coast defenses of the United States, but in the Pacific Americans were

compelled by their mid-Pacific territorial outpost to preserve the neutrality of adjacent waters without major external assistance.

Moreover, the United States' fervent interwar desire to avoid becoming entangled in the old world's problems again led to new forms of naval utility. Since the other major foreign and indigenous powers in the Pacific all based their prowess on naval armaments, maintaining the balance of power in the region was a maritime affair. When the rough imperial equilibrium, dominated by the British, was disturbed by the rising geopolitical aspirations of post-First World War Japan, which were met by refusal of the Western powers to accept Japan's claim to an equal seat at the international table, Tokyo faced the prospect of increasing its military and naval strength in ways that would compel Westerners to accept Japan on its own terms. That agenda appealed to some Japanese, but caused others to question the wisdom of a confrontational response. Especially during the economic prosperity of the 1920s, this alternative seemed wasteful. In order to defuse the situation and to help assure peace in the Pacific which was ideal for preserving American neutrality, Washington -- guided by prominent advocates of naval arms control such as Senator Borah of Idaho -- took the lead in the series of negotiations labeled the Washington Conferences of 1921-22.[13] A key product of those negotiations was a set of preemptive restrictions on a looming naval arms race. The U.S. Navy, thereby, became a vital chesspiece in a skillful diplomatic game. Naval arms control in the Pacific was a basic element in preserving American neutrality. Though both "isolationism" and "naval arms control" became virtually taboo subjects during the

subsequent cold war years, it is nonetheless true that each theme was important in prewar U.S. policy and that for many years they worked.

The arms control regime in the pre-war Pacific did not end with the attack on Pearl Harbor. Even as Tokyo used maritime restrictions to keep Western countries at a distance, and vice versa (it is important to note), Japan by the late 1920s and early '30s was enroute to strengthening its ground forces for eventual use on the Asian mainland. While a harbinger of what was to come, none of that maneuvering violated agreements with the Western states in Asia. Westerners had not paid sufficient attention to the inter-Asian side of the Pacific power balance. Japan's naval arms control agreements worked to its advantage because it kept the Royal and U.S. Navies from becoming proximate threats to Japan and allowed monies Tokyo did not spend on a naval arms race to be devoted to defense-industrial and ground force purposes. Though Japan cut a few minor corners in the naval arms control agreements, on balance, Tokyo kept its word and did not engage in a serious naval build-up until after the naval treaties had been allowed to lapse according to their legal provisions. By that time global economic depression put an initial crimp in all countries' desires for an arms race. That inhibition persisted in some countries, notably the United States which clung still more fervently to its oceanic buffers, but others -- Germany and Japan -- used an arms build-up to jump start their weakened economies.

The growth of fascist European and Asian military power severely tested American will to remain neutral. American

isolationism was predicated on a desire not to become entangled in old world conflicts. Such conflicts were considered traps that Americans should avoid, lest they become pointlessly entangled in what a later generation of Americans called a quagmire. The "Great War," as the First World War was then known, generated considerable cynicism and wariness among Americans who -- having violated their principles on behalf of a "war to end all wars" -- discovered after the fact that it was merely the largest of a series of old world conflagrations. The United States' role in victory in the Great War had not stopped the recurrent cycles of war and peace and renewed preparation to fight again. As the various peace and arms control conferences produced regulatory regimes that could only work when all parties wanted them to work, Americans retrenched behind their protective oceanic borders, relieved to be in the distant Western Hemisphere and determined to stay out of the old world's problems. Nonetheless, the combination of changing military technology which made the oceans metaphorically shrink and, more importantly, the growth of liberal internationalism among some Americans put a crack in American isolationist armor.

Concerns grew among Americans that fascist regimes in Germany, Italy, and Spain would endanger two groups that certain Americans valued. Some Americans feared the consequences for progressive socialists in Europe. This was at a time in U.S. history when a profound debate was occurring over the ability of capitalism to lift the United States out of the Great Depression. Consequently the American left, broadly defined, felt empathy for their European counterparts who were endangered by the growth of fascist military

power. Other Americans felt sympathy for a very different segment of Europe as Nazi armed aggression conquered some countries and threatened others, from which many Americans had descended. This became particularly acute vis-a-vis Great Britain. As a consequence of these anxieties, American steadfastness as a neutral was stretched. As the foreign wars escalated, American neutrality was manipulated in creative ways by the Roosevelt administration, much to the consternation of American conservatives who accused FDR of being duped by the left, by ethnic activists, and by British imperialists into steps that would entangle the United States in a war that he had promised to avoid.

Impact of Second World War

Though virtually none of this escalation of U.S. concerns had involved the Pacific, where Japan's aggression against China, Manchuria, and the Soviet Union was widely publicized, it was in the Pacific that the United States would be drawn into the war it had so ardently tried to avoid. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor crystallized instantly for virtually all Americans, the need for a U.S. response. Although some critics subsequently expressed suspicions that American pressures on Japan, in conjunction with Western imperial powers, may have induced the Pearl Harbor attack as a way to ease American entry into the European conflict that was of greater concern to more Americans, such complaints had little impact and were overtaken by events. What mattered for most Americans was that the war had been brought to American territory. The assault on Hawaii shattered the American sense of distance from a conflict that was engulfing so many other parts of the world. Equally significant,

the vulnerability of the United States' naval buffer for its neutrality had been exposed by the devastating nature of the damage inflicted on the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

There is no need in this analysis to attempt a survey of the role of the U.S. Navy in the Second World War that then unfolded for Americans, in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. That history is too well known to require further elaboration here.[14] Nonetheless, the impact of that war on the U.S. Navy's long term role in Asia-Pacific affairs is worth assessing. Virtually overnight, the Pacific changed from an area of tension notable for a kind of deterrence between the Japanese Empire on the one hand, and an array of Western countries on the other, into a battle zone with a radically altered geopolitical calculus. Though rumors of an expanded war were rife, many assumed the Japanese were prudent enough not to precipitously risk taking the naval battle to the Westerners before Tokyo had solidified its continental gains. Even though Great Britain's troubles on the home front diverted the Royal Navy, its aura still loomed large in the Pacific. Similarly, the sleeping giant image of the United States was well understood in Asia. In fact, despite its neutrality, the United States actually loomed largest among Western states in the Pacific. As the Japanese attacks on Hawaii and in Southeast Asia demonstrated, however, such imagery was not enough to deter Tokyo from taking a risk which almost succeeded. In short order, the U.S. Navy saw its role change from a buffer, and bargaining piece, into the overt vanguard of the West in Asia. Partly thanks to Japanese propaganda, and partly due to the reality of a sudden realization that the other Western powers were

no longer as capable as the United States of maintaining a significant presence in the Pacific as their homelands were torn by war, the U.S. Navy instantly formed the core of the region's non-Asian resistance to the Japanese.

In stark contrast to Europe where Americans again joined other Westerners in a diversified effort to throw back fascist advances at sea, but mainly on land, in the Pacific the battle was overwhelmingly maritime as far as Americans were concerned. To be sure, the land battles between Japan and China were a major factor in Japan's war (as was Germany's Eastern Front with the Soviet Union in that theater), but the American view of each theater was naturally more parochial. From the outset, therefore, Americans treated the Pacific as a maritime theater and an "American" theater. This did not sit well with some in the U.S. Army and some U.S. allies -- notably the Brits, Aussies, and Kiwis -- but they eventually had to face the reality that such American perceptions were accurate when juxtaposed to the diversification of the European part of the war. Perhaps the best evidence for this was the profoundly maritime-oriented manner in which a U.S. Army General, Douglas MacArthur, coordinated the conduct of the Pacific War.

Equally striking was the way in which American leaders in the Second World War decided to emphasize the European theater. Even though it was an attack from Asia which brought the United States out of its neutrality, and American forces in the Pacific had borne the initial casualities, American responses after war was declared were schizophrenic. Instead of focusing on the source of the

attack and resolving the immediate problem, Americans opted to emphasize what most people in the United States prior to the war considered to be the greater long term danger. The war in the Pacific was made a secondary priority until the European theater had been resolved.

In both respects the United States set precedents that were to have lasting influence for decades to come. The United States moved toward making the Pacific what many have considered an American 'lake.' Despite such new regional primacy, the United States simultaneously made clear that U.S. national interests dictated an emphasis upon European affairs and a conscious decision to put the Asia-Pacific region second as a priority. As far as the U.S. Navy's role in the Pacific was concerned this was a good news/bad news proposition. The Second World War propelled the U.S. Navy into a level of overt regional importance that it had never experienced previously. It openly supplanted the Royal Navy. At first this appeared to be a temporary arrangement, but by the end of the war the combination of a staggering increase in U.S. Naval power and the marked decline of the British Empire's clout had made it clear that the transfer of naval power was not temporary. By vanquishing the Imperial Japanese Navy, and with no credible Western rival, the U.S. Navy truly ruled the waves in the Pacific. A naval Pax Britannica had been replaced by a naval Pax Americana. Though the U.S. Navy's role in the Atlantic also increased markedly, it was substantially offset by the continued presence of the Royal and other Western navies, and -- even more -- by the preeminence of ground forces in that theater. Therefore, in the course of World War

Two, the U.S. Navy's Pacific role overwhelmingly dwarfed its relative roles elsewhere. On the other side of the coin, however, the Pacific remained throughout an afterthought for most Americans. It never became the key theater until after V-E Day, and even then had to compete for Washington's attention with the great concern Americans expressed for post-war European recovery.

Had it not been for the nuclear attacks on Japan, this relative emphasis might have changed. If extensive ground warfare had been necessary by Western forces in China, Manchuria, the Far Eastern portions of the Soviet Union, Korea, and the Japanese home islands in order to subdue the Japanese Empire, the American image of the Pacific war would by very different today. Those terrible new weapons foreshortened that war and reinforced the maritime interpretation just outlined by enabling Americans to avoid truly extensive ground combat in Asia. Consequently, at the end of the war the United States (and its navy) found itself in the cat-bird's seat vis-a-vis the Pacific, but had not altered the overall American view of the Asia-Pacific region as of far less relative importance compared to Europe.

Lest those circumstances suggest the Pacific was a backwater, it must also be stressed that the Second World War's disruption of American neutralist-isolationist proclivities reshaped the United States' strategic worldview. Whereas internationalism had once been an aspersion cast by conservatives, in the course of the war many of those conservatives foresook the legacy of the founding fathers and became converts to collective security. For virtually an entire generation of Americans the "Munich syndrome" denoting

appeasement of aggressive states became an object lesson from which they refused to waver. This, in turn, infused an appreciation for the importance of distant regions of the world to the global security consciousness which emerged in wartime America as it evolved into a world power. By the end of that war, when the United States had arguably become the sole world power, the globalist worldview with international responsibilities had sunk deep roots among many more Americans than had been true on the eve of the attack on Pearl Harbor. This new mindset was tremendously important for the Asia-Pacific region because it found itself elevated to unprecedented importance in the minds of American elites. It clearly ranked behind Europe, but it also was firmly ahead of regions of the world that ranked third or lower. Being of secondary importance to the United States in the emerging postwar era was not only a major step up in relative terms compared to prewar neutrality, it also represented a very high level of intrinsic ascribed value in American eyes. Having played the main role in Japan's defeat (with due apologies to China's role, it would not have prevailed absent the United States), Americans felt they had inherited a set of responsibilities for the peace and stability of the region.

Postwar Pacific Strategy

The importance of this new U.S. relationship with Asia for the U.S. Navy cannot be overrated. If the postwar Pacific was an American lake, the U.S. Navy was by default the guardian of that 'lake.' It had virtually no competition. In the early postwar period the Royal Navy still had pretentions to "ruling the waves" in the

region, but they quickly proved hollow as the once great British Empire began to crumble around it. No other naval power was remotely in the same league as the United States. Ironically, the U.S. Navy which had been compelled to forego the ambitions cultivated by Admiral Mahan's imperialism in the name of interwar neutrality, now found itself more powerful than even Mahan had imagined by virtue of having fought a war against Asian imperialism. Therefore a navy which received its first major institutional boost from an American variant of imperialism can be seen as the beneficiary of an anti-imperialist impulse.

Compounding the irony, the U.S. Navy's new-found role of temporary policeman of the Pacific soon took on proportions that -- in the eyes of many Asians -- toyed with imperialism again. In the immediate postwar period, the United States was firm in its anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist, and anti-fascist demeanor. This is best seen in the American rush to dispose of the United States' colony in the Philippines. It also is clearly seen in the American effort to rid Asia of the remnants of Japanese colonialism (i.e. in Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan) and imperialism (i.e. in China and Southeast Asia). As these efforts were progressing, however, two parallel events occurred. As part of the primary focus on European recovery, the United States confronted the dilemma created by the argument of some Europeans that they needed to retain their colonies if the central state was to maximize its chances for success. In tandem with this development, cold war tensions materialized between the United States and the nascent Soviet bloc in a manner that reinforced European colonial arguments vis-a-vis Asia and

raised concerns in Washington about the United States' position as the defacto sole safeguard against a geopolitical vacuum in the Western Pacific. Americans feared that communist gains being made in Eastern Europe and China would spread like a cancer throughout Asia.

As a result of these circumstances the United States, and the U.S. Navy as its main military instrument in the region, soon found itself in an unexpected and unwanted position. Instead of wrapping up the liberation of former Japanese-controlled territories as quickly as had been hoped, dealing with occupied Japan as a discrete and finite problem, and demobilizing most of the United States' armed forces for a long-term peace, American postwar power made it the logical nexus of the forces which rejected communism as an alternative. The anti-communist thrust of postwar American ideology yielded an odd mixture of approaches. To prevent a vacuum from developing that Marxist revolutionaries might fill, the United States hedged its anti-colonialist preferences. Americans did fulfill their commitment to Philippine independence, but Washington was less resolute when it came to opposing the return of British, French, and Dutch colonialists to the Southeast Asian domains that had been taken from them by wartime Japanese efforts to rid Asia of Western control. At the time it seemed prudent to go slow in these matters, politically sanction the necessity of European colonial reentry into Southeast Asia, and militarily provide the cover under which these options could occur. Though less heavy-handed, U.S. policy toward Korean independence from Japan also tilted toward the seemingly assured stability of the most conservative of the

available political options in the American-controlled half of Korea. In keeping with this conservative anti-communist tilt, the United States' policy toward occupied Japan also shifted toward an effort to use the ample human skills and conservative political proclivities of the recently defeated enemy as the basis for creating a nascent U.S.-Japan bulwark against communist expansionism in Asia.

In short, Americans in Asia were fleshing out a regional version of the containment doctrine which Washington devised to cope with Moscow's ambitions in Western Eurasia. There was considerable irony in the conservative themes that ran through this agenda because these themes called upon anti-communist conservative Americans to remain active participants in postwar collective security. Such activism amounted to volunteering for precisely the entangling alliances which Americans, since Washington and Jefferson, had disavowed.

Almost as important, the ways in which U.S. containment policy for postwar Asia required the U.S. Navy to become an active instrument of U.S. policy through routine forward deployments marked a radical departure for a branch of the U.S. armed forces which previously had been so closely identified with conservative isolationism and noninterventionism. The reasons for this switch in orientation within the Pacific was only partly due to the overall ideological shift in U.S. policy that stemmed from events in Europe. It had more to do with the ways in which cold war geopolitics fostered the doctrine of containment. Behind that doctrine was an extensive literature predicated on the dynamic tension between a powerful country in the "heartland" of Eurasia (as described

variously by Mackinder and Haushofer[15]) and a network of countries or colonial territories strung out around the edges of Eurasia, which Spykmann labelled the "rimland."[16] These ways of conceptualizing the balance of power around the main territorial and population centers of the world meshed well with the seapower notions of Mahan and the airpower notions of de Seversky[17] and Mitchell[18]. For decades the geopolitical and diplomatic "great game" had been waged between rival European centers of power with the upstart Japanese as an outsider. Although dressed in modern garb, this was precisely the cyclical quagmire from which the United States had chosen to abstain.

Strategic Priorities

Americans appreciated seapower, but -- until the 1940s -- visualized it primarily as an agent of stability that the Royal Navy would provide to keep the global balance intact. The Second World War upset the equilibrium and thrust the U.S. Navy into an approximation of the role the Royal Navy had played for so long. Without an overt effort to switch roles that would have been an affront to the Royal Navy, and which probably would not have been well accepted by most Americans who rejected the idea that the United States had fought World War Two to make the world safe for the revival of colonialism, a transferral nonetheless occurred. The Royal Navy gradually faded into a supportive role and the U.S. Navy took the lead. While this was evident in most sectors around the Eurasian continent (South Asia being a temporary exception), it was most transparently obvious in the Western Pacific where the U.S. Navy ran the show.

Despite the apparent and real parallels between the prewar Royal Navy and the postwar role of the U.S. Navy, there was a fundamental difference which was crucial. For the British, as it was for the Americans in most of the 19th century, commercial imperial motives guided the extension of naval interests. In other words, the flag usually followed trade and when it did not, and led the way instead, there was a clear commercial agenda behind the effort to show the flag. In these terms the former roles of the Royal Navy and the U.S. Navy were an aberration from the geopolitical grand designs that evolved from theories spun by Mackinder et al. Geopolitics from the late 19th century through World War Two described a strategic environment that was rather abstract. Control of the "heartland" and/or the "rimland" was not necessarily predicated on the economic factors that control of territory implied but because of their explicit military utility in a spatial sense. Postwar American ideas of containment, and especially the naval portion of containment around the rimland through the use of seapower, deviated sharply from the former commercial motives and hewed to the much more narrow strategic interpretation that grew out of geopolitics. In this sense it also bore similarities to Mahan's views. From all these threads, a maritime-oriented national strategic perspective was created for a North American 'island' that emphatically put military strategy and tactics first and commercial economic relations second, at best. American leaders understood the importance of trade for national well being, of course, but like Mahan they saw it as a symbiotic interplay in which a safe and secure geopolitical environment that could be assured

through seapower, was a precondition for the levels of economic prosperity necessary to sustain naval forces capable of securing freedom of the seas.

The cold war years, therefore, are marked by a profound emphasis on military and ideological themes within U.S. national security strategy, with economic themes playing subordinate and derivative roles. This carried over into U.S. naval strategy, as part of the national strategy. Whether in the Atlantic or Pacific, the American Navy during the 1940s, '50s, '60s, '70s, and '80s fulfilled roles and missions that were overwhelmingly militarily motivated. There was virtually no instance of American merchants, bankers, or investors calling upon the Defense Department generically, and the U.S. Navy, specifically to make regions of the world safe for their economic activity.[19] To the extent commercial concerns entered into American strategic calculations they were phrased in terms of the ways American forces could preserve peace and stability in a given area of the world to facilitate the initial economic recovery of certain states and their continued prosperity once they had regained their economic viability. In the early and middle years of the cold war such commercial concerns were present, but they were cast in a decidedly strategic framework. That is, U.S. strategy was not derived from a perceived need to foster economic well-being for its own merits, but because there was a military need for viable economic entities in certain regions whose prosperity would serve U.S. strategic interests.

The key features in these priorities were that they were determined by military-oriented U.S. strategists, most directly

served the commercial interests of foreign firms (not American), and were pitched to the U.S. private sector as part of the cost of being a good global citizen which should eventually reward the American taxpayer through the benefits to the United States of being the strategic cornerstone of a growing international trading network.

This approach was more tangible in postwar Europe where the Marshall Plan had implicit and explicit links with American conservatives' newly cultivated enthusiasm for internationalism. Americans had humanitarian reasons for supporting the Marshall Plan, but the United States also stood to gain economically if Europe revived, worked closely with a prosperous America, and jointly defended from the Bolsheviks the Atlanticist's vision of the "world" that mattered. In this grand design the U.S. defense establishment played the role of a foundation upon which the plans for a cold war alliance of politically and economically free nations would be developed. The U.S. Navy played an important role in those activities, but not uniquely important. In Europe it had to share the limelight with the U.S. Army and Air Force. Because of the true centrality of the "Central Front" in the cold war, this theater always was consciously joint but was just as consciously acknowledged to be guided by Army concerns. It was no accident that the top commanders in Europe have come from the U.S. Army, not the Navy.

In the Pacific the scene was different. There was no equivalent of the Marshall Plan. The main reason for this was the Atlanticist tradition among key U.S. decisionmakers. Even when they were motivated by prewar isolationist sentiments U.S. officials

acknowledged that Europe was the nexus of the modern world. During the Second World War, the European priorities were clear. These carried forward into the cold war and the Marshall Plan. The Asia-Pacific region, even in a fairly well defined and markedly elevated second rank position, enjoyed none of that attention. The ostensible, and partly valid, reason for this hierarchy, was the American fear that Europe was the ripest plum. Only Japan, in all of Asia, approximated such a tempting morsel for Soviet aggression. In this context, it was difficult, if not impossible, to make a persuasive case that the Asia-Pacific region enjoyed remotely the level of potential that Europe did or that there was much in Asia which would warrant American commercial attention in the early postwar years. This made the military-oriented strategic argument intrinsically more powerful in the Pacific. Any commercial rewards for pursuing this strategy were assumed to be very long run indeed. While there was some farsighted U.S. commercial interest in Asia, pegged to Japan's eventual revival and fantasies of the "Great China Market" which long had lured Westerners to the Far East, they were dwarfed by postwar American economic interest in Europe. As important, there was no American groundswell of commercial pressure upon the U.S. Government to go make the Asia-Pacific region safe for American trade and investment.

Seapower & Asian Ground Wars

Accentuating the differences, the Pacific remained throughout the postwar years a U.S. Navy operation. American experiences on the ground militarily in Asia were not happy ones. In Korea, Americans learned what limited war in the nuclear age really was

like and they did not enjoy the experience. The Korean stalemate was far from the victory that Americans thought was their due if they put forth the proper effort. That ground war was a deviation from the United States' then fledgling postwar maritime strategy in the Pacific. The semi-permanent U.S. ground commitment in Korea after the 1953 truce proved to be a NATO-like exception to the maritime role in the Pacific. That exception also was characterized by the U.S. Army's tendency to prepare for European wars, but then fight them in Asia. It had done so in World War Two by necessity, and in Korea because the Korean civil war was an unanticipated contingency. Having emerged from that conflict shaken by the political realities of nuclear escalation and by a close call regarding a full scale ground war with China's massive forces, Americans generally concluded that ground wars in Asia should be avoided. Despite those lessons, Americans were scarcely more prepared to cope with the next Asian war they were drawn into.

The Vietnam War's story is a complicated one for Americans. Bitterness and frustrations were widespread in its wake. There are many versions of why the United States did not succeed. Without denigrating the roles played by the U.S. Navy at sea and in the air during that war, there have been no accusations that it lost the Vietnam War. It was lost either on the ground, in Washington, or in the American public's mind, depending upon whose interpretation one accepts.[20] It was not the U.S. Navy's war to win or lose. The point here is not to cast blame, but to point out that Vietnam, like Korea, was a ground-oriented exception to the overall maritime oriented U.S. strategy in the Pacific. It reinforced in the popular

consciousness the wisdom that the U.S. should avoid ground wars in Asia. This lesson became embedded in the so-called "Vietnam syndrome" and appears to have outlived that syndrome, assuming those inhibitions actually died during the Persian Gulf War. These two Asian wars clearly involved the U.S. Navy in major ways, but they remained on-shore exceptions to what was supposed to have been an offshore-focused U.S. military presence in the Pacific. This focus made the Pacific radically different from the Atlantic as a theater for U.S. forces. Despite pockets of continentalism and jointness, it has been throughout the postwar years a realm where seapower was preeminent. It is no accident that the U.S. Commander in the Pacific, CINCPAC, always is an admiral.

The cold war's history in the Asia-Pacific region therefore is distinctly different than in Europe. Not only were the strategic and alliance conditions radically different, in Europe it stayed 'cold' while Asia turned 'hot' twice in major ways. Had Europe ever faced the equivalent of a 'Korea' or a 'Vietnam,' there is every reason to believe that the U.S. Army-oriented command structure within NATO would have remained intact and waged that hypothetical war. In the Pacific, however, neither of the two wars which occurred within the overarching context of the cold war were kept within the confines of a maritime-orientation. Although the U.S. preferred to rely on mobile seapower, circumstances compelled it to transfer land-based forces to the region to fight another sort of war. Had European equivalents to Korea and Vietnam occurred, they almost certainly would have entailed significant sea battles too. In Asia, however, none of the cold war adversaries confronted on the

battlefield by Americans were naval powers worthy of the name. Hence, while the U.S. Navy controlled the "American Lake," that ability to exercise seapower was not a truly major concern for either Pyongyang or Hanoi. Their dependence upon the oceans militarily and logistically was minimal. Faced with that constraint, there was no way for American leaders to compel the enemy to fight on the maritime terms the U.S. preferred. While this meant the United States dominated the seas, it also meant it could not readily turn that asset to its advantage.

Consequently, the American preference for reliance on seapower in the Pacific was exposed as having two clear facets. When seapower was configured in support of the projection of land-based ground and air power, the track record was not very good. One effort produced a stalemate. The other effort produced defeat for the United States' ally, a severe setback for U.S. prestige, and -- arguably -- the most traumatic episode in the history of U.S. foreign and defense policy. In their wake, there was little readiness to reengage in another Asian land war spin-off from the United States' maritime-based commitments to the region. Aside from the maintenance of ground-based (Army and Air Force) commitments to maintaining the form of peninsular deterrence that emerged in Korea from the mid-1950s to date, which was undergirded primarily by nuclear power rather than seapower (although the latter contributed to the former), the United States shied away from the prospect of yet another ground war spin-off in Asia. That prospect was never disavowed, nor could it have been for fear that the overall maritime strategy would be seen as having a major loophole, but

there was no enthusiasm for a third U.S. ground war in Asia during the cold war. By avoiding that alternative, U.S. strategy in the Pacific revealed an emphasis on maritime deterrence but in an environment in which the United States was unlikely to be challenged at sea. Therefore, U.S. naval deterrence during that period must be judged relatively passive.

Cold War Climax

These developments led to, in turn, two pronounced shifts in U.S. maritime strategy in the Pacific. The most publicized was the shift late in the cold war toward the development of "The Maritime Strategy" (as contrasted with the generic label used in this analysis) under the leadership of President Reagan and his first Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman. This approach to naval strategy was extremely controversial because it seemed to put the U.S. Navy on a pedestal versus the other services and because it was very confrontational vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.[21] It did both, but each requires some explanation. That strategy was simultaneously a device to refocus the consciousness of U.S. Naval officers on the special roles and missions the navy fulfilled and a way to coordinate those tasks globally against the Soviet Union's cold war threat. It succeeded on both counts, but aroused envy because of its naval boosterism and fear because it seemed to engage in brinksmanship tactics. For the U.S. Navy in the Pacific, its impact was more acute. Through its boosterism it greatly helped to revive morale that had sagged after the Vietnam debacle. Moreover, by focusing on what was then perceived as a growing Soviet naval menace, in the form of the USSR Pacific Fleet's blue water capabilities, it also gave the U.S.

Navy something it had not truly possessed in the Pacific previously, namely a genuine naval adversary.

Before the Soviet Pacific Fleet grew into a serious rival at sea,[22] the U.S. Navy had primarily served preemptive functions during the 1950s, '60s, and most of the '70s. By the late 1970s and throughout most of the 1980s, the American Navy finally faced in the Pacific a potential foe comparable to that which it had long faced in the Atlantic. Although this was a setback in terms of the global balance of power between the superpowers that signalled the growth of Soviet power in what had been an American Lake, and was not sought by the U.S. Navy, once it had occurred the U.S. Navy clearly maximized the opportunities presented by the appearance of a real foe. The U.S. Navy in the Pacific was no longer just a peace keeping element in deterrence (as important as that was), it now could justifiably claim to be preparing for a war-fighting role. This was precisely the scenario The Maritime Strategy addressed, and which caused so much anxiety in Asia where Asians feared the Reagan administration's ideas about compensatory counterstrikes that would treat the Pacific as a corollary of the European threat environment. The U.S. Navy in the Pacific had become a far more active participant in this form of deterrence.[23]

The second pronounced shift occurred over a longer span of time. Moreover, it has not ended the way The Maritime Strategy did with the passing of the U.S.-Soviet cold war. In the early years of the cold war, and during the 'hot' interludes in Korea and Vietnam, the U.S. Navy stressed its major role as the provider of freedom of the seas. This evolved into the Sea Lines of

Communication (SLOC) defense doctrine. This approach was integral to the notion of an American lake in the Pacific and was a lineal functional descendant of the Royal Navy's role in the Pacific and other oceans. The trouble was that this task was not very arduous since there was not very much in the Pacific capable of interfering with the freedom of the seas. Moreover, for years the commerce which depended upon regional freedom of the seas, was not tremendously important to the United States. For all of the logic SLOC defenses had within a generic American maritime strategy for the Pacific, it did not draw much attention in Washington.

By the late 1970s and the 1980s, however, the growth of Soviet naval power and the emergence of the Pacific Basin as a major trading center changed these calculations considerably. The growth of the Soviet Fleet in the Far East, based in ports on the Sea of Japan and Okhotsk with an outlyer in ex-U.S. facilities at Camranh Bay, Vietnam, made the sea lane protection role more credible. The fact that Soviet interdiction of U.S. shipping (or that of U.S. friends and allies) would risk escalation to a much larger conflict at a time when the Reagan-Lehman team was sending unequivocal signals about the U.S. Navy's readiness to take on an adversary greatly mitigated the actual danger. It thereby became part of U.S. deterrence policy and diminished the likelihood that SLOC defense might ever be carried out. Nonetheless, no one could be certain that freedom of the seas would be secure without the U.S. Navy playing that role. Moreover, at the same time that SLOC defenses were becoming more meaningful militarily, their value to regional commerce also grew because of the increased scope of that commerce within the

region and between the region and various Western countries. The latter pointedly included the United States whose global trade patterns shifted during those years from preponderant ties with Europe to an emphasis on Japan and the "little dragons" of Asia. However unlikely Soviet interdiction of that trade might have been for geopolitical reasons, its possibility could not be denied by merchants on either side of the Pacific.

These two shifts produced a qualitative change in the U.S. Navy's role in the Pacific. Although the Pax Americana aspects of the Pacific as an "American Lake" had been challenged by the Soviet Union during the second flourishing of the cold war in the early-to-mid Reagan years, American forces -- led by the U.S. Navy in a style it had not needed previously -- rebuffed that challenge and contained Soviet ambitions. This made the U.S. Navy in the Pacific far more of a central player in the cold war than it had been previously. No one at the time foresaw that this was a last gasp of the Soviet "empire," but the subsequent changes within the Soviet Union proved that Moscow could not outspend or outperform the United States. It could not sustain its challenge to the entire West. This latter aspect of the Soviet Union's failure to prevail in the cold war is directly related to events in the Asia-Pacific region which the U.S. Navy helped foster. The region's prosperity is a direct consequence of the peace and stability which the U.S. Navy provided. There is little doubt that Moscow's will seriously faltered when it realized it not only had to cope with the economic powerhouses of North America and Western Europe, but also had to deal with Japan and the "new

Japans" of Asia, which were challenging ethnically Western countries even as they became part of an extended concept of the West.

End of the Cold War

In these terms the U.S. Navy's activities in the Pacific directly contributed to the end of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and its regional manifestation. The U.S. Navy can, and does, take great pride in those contributions. It can take equal pride in militarily sustaining East and Southeast Asia's economic success stories. In helping to bring all this about, however, the U.S. Navy also helped to create the post-cold war era which the United States now confronts. The entire U.S. defense establishment was caught off guard by the rapidity of the cold war's demise.[24] Throughout the long cold war the U.S. Department of Defense prided itself on its preparations for various threat contingencies, ranging from small regional conflicts to thermonuclear war between the superpowers. It took equal pride in its preparations for maintaining deterrence so that war, especially catastrophic nuclear war, would not break out. It did not, however, prepare itself for the kind of peace which victory in the cold war might bring because it seemed so unlikely to occur and, consequently, its nature could not be predicted.

This lack of preparation for "cold war termination" was evident in all branches of the U.S. armed forces, but was especially acute in the U.S. Navy which was reaching its peak of the Lehman-era boom precisely at the point the cold war started to thaw. Arguably there may have been a causal relationship between these events. Nevertheless, the U.S. Navy was not engaged in a build-up

in order to be prepared for the day when peace would break out. However, thanks to the cumulative pressures of years of Western pressures upon the Soviet-led camp of the cold war, by the mid-1980s Moscow's ability to perpetuate its struggle began to crumble. The Gorbachev years marked the beginning of a transition in Soviet and world affairs whose eventual product is, as of this writing in the fall of 1991, highly uncertain. Because of that uncertainty, and the remote possibility it suggests of a substantial reversal of all those factors which constitute the "end" of the cold war, some very conservative Americans (and U.S. allies) resist the notion that the cold war actually is over.[25] That possibility is discounted here because of the extreme difficulty of reassembling that which has been disassembled. As the saying goes, it is easier to make an omelette from an egg, than to reverse the process. The unification of Germany, dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, reassertion of Eastern European independence from Moscow's influence, and drastic weakening of the Soviet Union's internal political, economic, and social infrastructure have created momentum which cannot be turned back. In the wake of the failed coup in Moscow, August 1991, the collapse of communist party instruments of power and the rise of separate power bases in the various Republics that remain tied to a looser quasi-Soviet system appear to have made the cold war's end irreversible.

American responses to this European-focused set of developments have been cautious, but innovative. A wide range of improved U.S.-Soviet/Russian relationships symbolize the core responses. Facilitated by the reduced threat environment now

perceived in Europe, in which possible Soviet or Russian aggression is calculated in terms of years of warning time rather than days, the United States' involvement in NATO has been adjusted accordingly. At the DOD center of these responses is the new U.S. national security planning strategy which contemplates radical changes in force postures, deployments, commands, and thinking about contingencies. Most of this new thinking in DOD has emphasized Europe and the Soviet Union. Relatively little explicit attention has been paid to Asia in that context. Consequently, it is worth assessing the relevance of the new U.S. strategy for the Asia-Pacific region prior to evaluating how it, and the post-cold war era, will affect the U.S. Navy in the Pacific during the coming years.[26]

A New American Strategy In Asia?

American strategy in Asia is on the verge of being transformed by larger global trends. The superpowers were understandably relieved by the end of the cold war in Europe. Political and economic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe which produced the collapse of the Warsaw Pact mean that NATO no longer need fear bloc armor sundering the Central Front. That front no longer exists. It has gone the way of the Berlin Wall. In its wake, American officials, who prudently rely on the axiom that one must focus on an adversary's armed capabilities to inflict harm upon the United States rather than its intentions, now generally conclude that the Soviet Union's dramatic decline and transformation makes it far less dangerous. The failure of a coup in Moscow by hardliners in August 1991, which greatly enhanced domestic reformist tendencies,

reinforced reduced American threat perceptions. This has enormous consequences for U.S.-Asian relations. Responding to these dramatic geopolitical shifts, the United States is undertaking profound military reassessments. America is enroute to employing a "reconstitution" element in its long term planning strategy to prepare for a global war originating in Europe. However, Washington now assumes that such a war is unlikely and it no longer determines the U.S. force structure largely on the basis of a Soviet threat. Instead, it plans for uncertain regional contingencies. This approach is accompanied by new concepts of recalibrated "base" forces for various regions of the world.

It is a nascent strategic concept, emphasizing a broader definition of national security within a more flexible framework of reciprocal collective security, to be used selectively as contingencies warrant. Echoing the United States' strategic drawdown between the First and Second World Wars, while retaining a sense of global leadership commensurate with the nuclear age, the strategic concept as now contemplated is most striking vis-a-vis Europe where major force reductions are certain. Despite its European emphasis, the new strategy also calls for preliminary modest changes in the United States' force posture in the Pacific region's base force. It builds upon the Bush administration's first incremental reductions in U.S. ground and air forces in the Western Pacific.[27]

Although many in Europe are apprehensive that the new U.S. strategy, which changes the level of American forward deployed forces in Europe more than it does in Asia, is a further step in a U.S. shift toward a Pacific Century-oriented worldview, there is no

evidence to substantiate their fears. Rather than indicating any new focus on Asia, the relative emphasis on the Pacific which is produced by the greater cuts in Europe reflects two short-term phenomena. First, there is an unwarranted sense among American military and diplomatic officials in the Asia-Pacific region that the cold war's end does not apply to this region as thoroughly. Despite pockets of cold war holdouts in Asia, this is a false overall perception which will be adjusted as reality sets in. Secondly, and most important for Europeans to understand, virtually all U.S. decisionmakers are Atlanticists whose entire working lives have been devoted to NATO- and EC-oriented affairs, focusing on the cold war threats from the Soviet Union. They have paid scant attention to the Asia-Pacific region, treating it as a corollary of U.S. global policy that can be readily adapted to policy changes made regarding the European-Soviet region.

In the new U.S. strategy Washington has followed these long-standing priorities again. Actions are being taken globally that affect the Asia-Pacific area, but not because of that region. There is no evidence that visions of a "Pacific Century" motivated any changes in overall U.S. strategy. Only as the imbalances in the consequent strategy become more evident, and as more Americans also come to terms with the end of Asia's cold war, will the United States make adjustments in the Pacific that are comparable to what already is being done in Europe. This will, of course, have major consequences for bilateral U.S. security relations with Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines which will no longer have a Soviet focus for Americans. Unless a surrogate threat perception can be discovered, or

developed, it seems unlikely that any of those bilateral relationships can remain intact.

Once the Soviet threat is removed, or vastly reduced, what alternative threat remains? No imminent threat looms across the region in the 1990s, except a common regional perception that North American and European free trade zones may exclude Asian products and pose a politico-economic 'threat' to Asians. Beyond that, as the United States deals with Asian allies Americans are likely to discover that there is no external threat to the Philippines, Koreans see the Japanese as their largest potential foreign threat, and the Japanese see potential threats from a unified Korean state and from Russians (as distinct from 'Soviets'), neither of which are dependent upon the existence of the cold war.

Many Asian states also are apprehensive about China's long-term ambitions and wonder about the wisdom of American support for a stronger China. Similarly, many Asians are concerned about Japan's long term ability to convert its economic influence into political and military power and, as a corollary, about the United States' ability to control that process. Furthermore, Asians are increasingly concerned about India's strategic ambitions and about signs of intra-Asian arms races. For Americans, however, the most important point about these security issues is that they are <u>not</u> part of the cold war. Nonetheless, rather than dwell on these post-cold war circumstances, most Asians prefer to keep the focus on the remnants of a Russian threat which is easier to sell to Americans. In this context, any attempt to perpetuate U.S. bilateral security treaties in the Pacific after the region's version of the cold war

eventually is put to rest, will require Americans to face a far more difficult challenge than they do in Europe as they try to redefine for domestic U.S. consumption why remaining security commitments should be kept intact.

Asian Reactions

Asia has reacted cautiously and prudently to the modest changes for U.S. forces in the Pacific announced by the Bush administration in 1990-91. There is no sign that any Asian country fully appreciates how those changes are linked to the larger strategic shift being contemplated. There is virtually no indication that Asian defense specialists are aware that the new U.S. national security strategy has any direct relevance for their part of the world.[28] It is universally seen as a US-USSR and NATO-oriented issue. Regular reassurances to Asia by senior U.S. State and Defense Department officials, that the United States will remain a constant and reliable factor in their security system,[29] apparently have been accepted at face value. If there are serious doubts, and there probably are -- given past U.S. inconsistencies that alarmed Asians -- they are not being expressed. Asians seem to prefer to let "sleeping [American] dogs lie." Rather than ask profound questions whose adverse answers they suspect are entirely predictable, and which they do not want to hear, Asians are not raising the issue.

Compounding this sense of caution and guarded confidence that the United States will not make truly major revisions to its post-cold war strategy as it applies to them, Asians tend to see the U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf War as a clear signal that Americans will not change their behavior. They are relieved by the

willingness of the United States, its leaders and masses, to perpetuate President Kennedy's readiness to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." This eagerness to be the leader, even at a high cost, reassures Asians greatly. It also surprises them greatly because they also see the United States as a superpower with economic feet of clay. In short, Asians -- even as they praise the United States and act as cheerleaders, and sometimes bankers, for the American cause -- wonder how long such disproportionate arrangements can last. They fear the United States will fall victim to the daunting problems outlined by another Kennedy -- Paul Kennedy of Yale.[30] So, even as Asians welcome what the United States says and hope that nothing fundamental will change in U.S. strategy for the Pacific, they also sense that there will be changes beyond the ability of Americans to control. Nonetheless, they do not yet connect this dynamic process to the evolving new U.S. strategy's relevance for Asia.

Instead, Asians are preoccupied by serious and growing frictions in U.S.-Asian economic relations. These are prominent in U.S. relations with Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and -- to a lesser extent -- various states in Southeast Asia. They loom far larger to Asia than contemporary concerns over military affairs. The best evidence of this is the cool Asian -- especially Japanese -- responses to U.S. pressures for coalition assistance during the Persian Gulf crisis. No prominent leader of a major state in Asia viewed that crisis from a perspective even approximating Washington's position. Cooperation was grudging at best. Japan

eventually rallied around the cause, but only under political duress. South Korea helped out, too, but minimally, belatedly, and with little enthusiasm. The PRC did virtually nothing to help the Desert Storm cause, and its arms sales contributed to the problem. Southeast Asians were asked to do nothing, and they were more than happy to oblige.

Asian leaders -- notably in Japan -- resented the notion that American leaders would arrogate to themselves the right to make decisions and take actions in the name of the greater good of a broadly defined western world (including the advanced economies of Asia). Still more grating was that, having taken these steps, Washington had the gall to twist their arms in pursuit of burdensharing funds, especially Japanese yen. None of this sat well with Asian leaders, who generally empathized with the reluctant Japanese. That some responded as forthcomingly as they did and, in the Japanese case, a double digit $billion range, had little relevance to any sense that they were genuine partners with the United States in a global coalition against distant aggression. Overwhelmingly, Asians cooperated rhetorically and financially, albeit reluctantly, to keep Americans off their backs and to help deflect further U.S. criticism of Asian trade practices. In effect, Asians were engaging in political and economic deterrence versus the United States, postponing a while longer the day of reckoning.[31]

This behavior points out clearly the ways in which Asians are preoccupied by their tense economic relations with the United States. Their major goals are to placate Americans, to keep tensions manageable, and to keep frictions from so frustrating Americans that

the United States could react adversely by retaliating through a trade war or reducing its security commitments in Asia. These would, in turn, compel Asians to deal autonomously and at much higher cost with their own defenses. This behavior exemplifies the ways in which most Asians hew to a broader and self-centered interpretation of their national security than Americans do regarding the United States. It also highlights why most Asians were relieved that the burdensharing spasm during the Persian Gulf crisis was focused almost exclusively on U.S.-Japan ties, thereby letting most Asians (especially Chinese and Koreans, who were no more enthusiastic than the Japanese) off the hook.

On balance, U.S. promises of strategic continuity in Asia, apparent American willingness to police the Asia-Pacific region despite disavowals of any desire to play the role, American hubris over unipolar victory in the cold war, and a perverse underlying sense that the United States' "feet of clay" gives Asia's most advanced states a quiet long term advantage that has not yet dawned on many Americans, collectively please Asians. They feel comfortable that events are going their way, that the United States will preserve the essential status quo for the next several years, and that enough remnants of the cold war persist in Asia, despite U.S. and Soviet efforts to defuse them, to keep the United States from applying any new strategy to Asia. Asians tend to feel that their region will not, and should not, be influenced as much as Europe by a new post-cold war world order. This, in turn, raises serious questions about how Americans might deal with Asians in this context.

End of Asia's Cold War

The reason more drastic changes in this theater have not yet been made, by applying the new strategy as vigorously in Asia as in Europe, is that the cold war has not completely ended in Asia. Some observers, notably former Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze,[32] feel that Asia's cold war is fully over. American officials are, of course, well aware that the global cold war is over, but their actions regarding Asia suggest lingering ambiguity. Statements from the center of the U.S. Government indicate that key officials want to apply post-cold war thinking to Asia. Similarly, examples in 1990 such as the DOD "East Asian Strategic Initiative" and the "President's Report [to the Congress] on the U.S. Military Presence in East Asia" indicate that they are putting such thought into action. Nevertheless, all these examples of forward thinking retain an emphasis on residual regional cold war era confrontation that are now cited as instances of strategic contingencies which the United States must be prepared to address. Furthermore, despite such marginal progress in a lingering cold war milieu, many American offficials on the scene in Asia are much less flexible and responsive to change. In part this gap may simply be bureaucratic inertia. It seems more purposeful, however, in that institutional conservatism -- especially within the U.S. armed forces -- leads many in the field to drag their heels in adjusting to new circumstances. To be blunt, there is a widespread view in the field and at sea that senior Pentagon and civilian agency officials are being precipitous in their adaptation to global geopolitical change. As a consequence, there is a tangible sentiment, expressed in private, that the people in the field are best

served by waiting out the latest cycle of policy innovators. In short, they have adopted an attitude that "this, too, shall pass." All signs indicate that they are wrong, but the net result is sluggish acceptance of the impact upon Asia of the end of the global cold war.

Has Asia's cold war ended? To answer that fundamental question, upon which much of a still evolving U.S. strategy will be based, requires that Americans, Asians, and Russians agree about what the "Asian cold war" really is and the nature of remaining threats. Though this may seem self-evident, it is not. There are two fundamental choices. One can assume remnants of Asia's cold war are so persistent that the new strategy need not be applied as vigorously as it will be in Europe (which is the U.S. assumption because U.S. forces and commands in the Asia-Pacific region are changing far less than in the Euro-Atlantic region) or one can demonstrate why it should be applied to this region as well because its version of the cold war either has ended or will soon end. To make the latter case requires that the "end" of Asia's cold war also be proven.

To sustain this proposition, it must be recognized that Asia's cold war has always differed from Europe's. In Europe, where the United States and its cold war allies shared common threat perceptions, there was one front line, one prime adversary, one ring of satellites in orbit around the Soviet center, and a joint security institution -- NATO -- through which the cold war was waged. Asia possessed none of these. Its version of the cold war was qualitatively different. Its cold war threat perceptions have been extraordinarily diverse. No two Asian states associated with the United States saw

the Soviet adversary in the same light. Most Asian participants in the cold war lacked a real front line or the strategic mentality such a barrier fosters. Korea's DMZ-arrayed deterrence stalemate is the clearest exception. Vietnam was a partial exception, though the front line in its war with the United States was amorphous. Hence, none of Asia's cold warriors perceived the other's equivalent of a front line in a manner suggesting a shared strategic vision.

The relatively weak indigenous ideological quotient of Asia's cold war, when coupled with a dual Soviet and Chinese focus of communist power, despite occasional shrill ideological rhetoric between Asia's divided nations, diluted the sense of "us versus them." Asia never developed cohesive rival ideological blocs comparable to those in Europe. The Sino-Soviet split further obscured the alienation regarding "them." Which them? Which us? The same phenomena muddied the notion of proxy or surrogate states within an adversary's bloc. Whom did Hanoi and Pyongyang heed? Conversely, whom did Seoul, Taipei, or Saigon heed? When were either side's client states acting autonomously? Because the villains in Asia's cold war were, unlike in Europe, never as precise or cohesive an entity to the defenders of freedom, the United States and its allies could never construct the equivalent of NATO in the Western Pacific, though some advocated such an institution. The difficulty was compounded by the systemic asymmetry of Asia's cold war camps. Again, unlike Europe, where each side possessed rough parity in ground and naval forces, in the Asia-Pacific region the United States and most of its friends stressed mobile maritime-based power, embodied by the U.S. Seventh Fleet, whereas the Soviet

Union, PRC, and states linked to them were overwhelmingly continental powers. In short, there were enormous strategic differences between Europe's cold war and the version that Asia experienced.

Were it not for the United States' presence in the Asia-Pacific region, transferring U.S.-Soviet tensions to the Soviet Union's eastern flank, it is doubtful that the area would have become a substantial participant in the cold war. This contrasts with Europe, where Americans and their European allies shared a sense of common risk and destiny. In Asia the United States was the central vehicle for transmitting cold war tensions with the Soviet Union to the region through various bilateral treaties and less formal relations. Simultaneously, American anti-communist ideology was the glue bonding those bilateral ties into a loose network, with the United States the nexus connecting disparate elements rather than as the leader of a common cause. Furthermore, U.S.-Soviet frictions superimposed a layer of global hostility upon existing Asian relations, intensifying some, obscuring others, and camouflaging still others. While some anti-communist elements in postwar Asia enthusiastically rallied around the U.S. cause, many phenomena in Asia's cold war did not emerge from that 'war' but had a life of their own.

Vivid examples of these are found in Japan-Soviet relations. Disputes over the so-called Northern Territories, several fishery zones, and a variety of economic issues may share a cold war veneer that remains essentially intact, despite President Gorbachev's April 1991 visit to Japan,[33] but they would have existed had the cold war

never developed. Japanese concerns about Soviet potentials for aggression probably would also have emerged without a cold war. More likely, they would have been confrontational for Japan because it would not have enjoyed a defense buffer provided by the United States. It was U.S.-Soviet hostility that wrapped the cold war around these events, which actually stem from longstanding Russo-Japanese cross-national relations.

Comparable examples of national apprehensions becoming entangled in the cold war are reflected in Sino-Japanese, Japan-North Korean, Southeast Asian-Chinese, and Indo-Pakistani animosities. Regional concerns about intimidation by the once ascendant Soviet empire did not differ greatly from earlier Czarist aggression. Those concerns would have developed had the cold war never occurred. Other shaky examples of perceived cold warrior behavior in Asia include the patent ambiguity of North Korea and Vietnam as proxies for either of their giant communist backers. Sometimes they appeared to act as client states, but often they went their own way. One could legitimately ask whether their proxydom was more in the eye of American beholders than controlled by America's adversaries in the cold war.

In Asia the indigenous stronghold of the cold war was the Korean peninsula. Its division, destruction in war, and cultivation as rival armed camps are Asia's clearest (though not precise) parallels to the European cold war. Unlike much of Asia, Korea was divided by an unambiguous military front line and the divided nation was riven by an imported ideological rivalry which established deep roots. Korea was part of the cold war's birth, matured with that era,

and now may be on the verge of ending its conflict along with the reduction in tension in the global cold war. Though many point to contemporary Korea as an example of the cold war's intractability in Asia, and a prime reason why the new U.S. strategy should not be applied as thoroughly throughout Asia,[34] the changing situation in Korea illustrates how Asia's most extreme example of the cold war also is thawing. Dramatic recent improvements in South Korean relations with the Soviet Union and China rank alongside the importance of changes in Eastern Europe. Progress in Japan-North Korea relations also help to reduce tensions. Even U.S.-North Korean relations are mellowing, although impeded by American concerns about International Atomic Energy Agency oversight of possible North Korean nuclear capabilities. If Korea's extreme version of the cold war can be resolved over the next few years, a real possibility now that both the United States and the Soviet Union at long last stand ready to help, and because Pyongyang's external support has been damaged by the upheaval in the Soviet Union, then all else in the Asian cold war also should be manageable.

As the superpowers and other major players seek to reduce cold war tensions in Asia, it is vital for them to recognize what is, and what is not, meant by "the cold war." Those cross-national tensions which stem from longstanding intra-Asian relations must be distinguished from their cold war trappings. Washington and Moscow must disassociate the vestiges of their cold war policies from those earlier contexts which, throughout the cold war years, possessed a vitality ensuring that they would have developed in any event. Neither Washington nor Moscow should permit themselves

to be trapped by remnants of cold war institutions, drift with the momentum of anachronistic cold war policies, be entangled by the inertia of stale cold war thinking, or be misled by the ghosts of cold war animosities. Most of Asia's remaining pockets of the cold war between the United States and whatever finally replaces the Soviet Union can be rapidly resolved as "cold war" phenomena if Washington and Moscow devote sufficient attention to them. Once this is done, the new U.S. planning strategy may be applied as thoroughly to Asia as it is to Europe.

Much can be removed from the lingering cold war environment in Asia by simply agreeing that many of Asia's assumed cold war problems never warranted that description. Many can be redefined out of existence, as the United States and PRC did with the Taiwan issue. It was effectively removed from the list of cold war hot spots where it once seemed so prominent and relegated to an intra-China concern. The other problems will not disappear, of course, any more than Taiwan's place within China did as a regional issue. Yet they too can legitimately be removed from a cold war milieu and returned to their rightful location, into a traditional cross-national geopolitical context. It is no longer necessary to treat outstanding Russo-Japanese, Sino-Japanese, Japan-Korea, Indo-Pakistani, or various Chinese-Southeast Asian disputes as lingering parts of the cold war. Neither are any intra-national problems necessarily linked to the cold war. Let these issues stand alone and be dealt with by the regional parties concerned. Similarly, Washington and Moscow no longer need perceive hostile third states as proxies. Moreover, even their lingering hostility should be far

more manageable by Washington, Moscow, and regional actors if totally removed from the cold war environment. Should Washington and Moscow choose, they could be much less sensitive to remaining ill will from far-flung countries, since that animosity would be redefined out of the cold war context.

Consequently, much of Asia's remaining cold war can be disposed of quickly by redefining the areal terms of reference. If the cold war's antagonists agree that neither is any longer a danger to each other in Asia, the hoary axiom about capabilities versus intentions will not sustain remnants of the cold war in Asia either. Too many Americans are reluctant to make that assumption. Nonetheless it is warranted because the severely weakened Soviet economy and troubled political system, and those of its republics, which allows the United States to revise sharply downward any expectation of an attack in Europe, cannot sustain a more effective military threat in far away Asia. The rapidly changing Soviet system, behind its Asian armed capabilities, is the same deteriorating and decrepit one behind its European capabilities. Moreover, in the Far East it must operate at the end of vulnerable, tenuous logistical supply lines, thereby diminishing its capabilities further. It is difficult to understand the continuing American anxiety about Soviet military strength in the Pacific region, especially in the form of the Soviet Pacific Fleet, or why the Soviet Union should be considered any more dangerous in Asia than in Europe. Even if, in a worst case situation, one assumes the Soviet or Russian military leaders in Asia were out of Moscow's control, they would still be hobbled by their disastrous economy and cut off from its European heart. Any such "worst case"

scenario must be considered a remote prospect in the wake of the failed Moscow coup of August 1991 and the dramatic changes which followed it. Coupling this objective reality with the improved expressed intentions of current leaders in Moscow, the prospects for completely ending Asia's cold war must be assessed positively. It is time the U.S. and Soviet Union, or its successor, redefine the Asian cold war out of existence. This will allow American defense officials to apply the new U.S. planning strategy to both Europe and Asia with equal thoroughness and enthusiasm.

Troubling Issues

Were the cold war's antagonists to take these positive steps, however, two areas still would loom as particularly troublesome. One is Korea, where a genuine Stalinist relic of the cold war persists. The progress toward Korean tension reduction made so far should be pursued, if possible. Just as in the superpower cold war, the capabilities versus intentions calculations in Korea are now changing enough to further reduce tensions. Since the singular parallels in Korea with Europe's cold war are genuine there is reason to hope that Europe's precedents, especially German unification and nuclear arms control, and the good will of Washington and Moscow, can be influential in Korea. Every effort should be made toward that end. If it works, all concerned can rejoice and welcome a stable, peaceful, and perhaps unified Korea to the post-cold war era. There is, however, a real possibility that the stubborn Korean cold war may prove uniquely resistant to change because of the uncompromising nature of the leadership in both Seoul and Pyongyang. Each seems

unwilling to make genuine concessions to the other that have characterized recent Washington-Moscow relations.

If tensions persist, Washington and Moscow confront a difficult choice. Should they allow one isolated remnant of the cold war to entangle them indefinitely? Or should they jointly decide to reduce their shared risk by leaving the Korean cold war to be resolved by the two Koreas? This would be unlikely today because of persistent American assumptions that events in Korea will affect adjoining states with serious consequences for the remaining cold war atmospherics in Asia. If, however, Asian regional security concerns are effectively removed from that anachronistic context by Washington and Moscow disassociating themselves, then Korea's ability to disrupt its neighbors' peace and stability -- though no less real for regional states -- is no longer a quasi-cold war vital issue. The Korean cold war can legitimately be left in a vacuum for them to resolve, as a civil war stalemated by its own entrenched bi-polar deterrence. Their success or failure would no longer bear on U.S. or Soviet/Russian vital interests vis-a-vis each other. Korean tensions, as a regional issue, could then legitimately revert to priority concerns for the peninsula's Asian neighbors, China and Japan. That Korea is, and probably always will be, a crucial country for China and Japan (and because of that for the Soviet Union and Russian Republic, too), does not necessarily mean the United States must continue to assign as high a priority to Korean affairs as it received during the cold war. This emphatically does not mean that Americans should be cavalier about Korea's fate. The United States has major interests there and a moral obligation built up over many years, but neither of

those factors warrant perpetuating cold war era security commitments if they damage larger U.S. national interests. This may seem a cold hearted resolution for Korea, but it is eminently realistic for Washington and Moscow as they seek to spread the influence of the post-cold war era. Knowing that Washington and Moscow enjoy this viable option should add to Seoul's and Pyongyang's incentives to make genuine compromises to end the Korean cold war rapidly before the Korean peninsula has lost its strategic relevance to Washington and Moscow.

Either way, Korea's stubborn perpetuation of the cold war could, and should, be dealt with. Much less manageable is the second problem. There will remain an overarching disparity between Asia and the symmetry of U.S.-Soviet tension reduction in the Atlantic-European realm, where comparable cuts can be negotiated on both sides of their armed balance. The differences in continental versus maritime power are not so glaring there and can be easily accommodated. Naval power can remain in rough parity, while ground-based forces are cut significantly. In the Asia-Pacific region, however, trade-offs are extraordinarily difficult between Soviet and Russian continental power and U.S. maritime power.[35]

This is evident globally in the U.S. reluctance to negotiate significant naval arms control[36] and in its new strategy which will allow large ground-based armed forces to be demobilized or put in reserves to await unknown contingencies. In part, this reflects the inherent personnel and industrial difficulties in reconstituting naval forces which have been demobilized or mothballed, even with the two year advance warning time the new strategy assumes for

reconstituting American capabilities against a revived threat from the Soviet Union. Equally important to the United States, however, is the justifiable perception that it remains more dependent upon maritime power in a sharply reduced threat environment than any future major adversary, including a revitalized Soviet threat. So, even as the cold war is terminated worldwide, the major powers must simultaneously agree upon mutual acceptance of differing military (ground and air forces) versus naval emphases in how to preserve their post-cold war national security. In other words, the existence of large Soviet or Russian ground-based armed forces in Asia should be considered by Americans to be 'natural' and a quid pro quo for Moscow's acceptance of large U.S. naval forces in the Pacific. Each's disproportionate scale compared to the other's resources in that defense sector should be accepted as a routine expression of the legitimate national security establishment of a continental power versus a maritime power. This step, which should be implemented by a Pacific version of the U.S.-USSR Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks in Europe, is essential to end Asia's cold war completely and allow smooth implementation of the United States' new planning strategy.

Examples of Asian circumstances that might be influenced by the new U.S. strategy and, in turn, might influence that strategy, are numerous. When asked about the likelihood of war in the wake of the reduced Soviet threat, General Powell (Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff) told the Washington Post "Haven't the foggiest. I don't know. That's the whole point. We don't know like we used to know."[37] American thoughts about hypothetical contingencies for

which U.S. forces should be prepared are outlined in the 1991 UNCLASSIFIED Joint Military Net Assessment. The major contingency it envisions in Asia concerns Korea. This contingency and those of lesser probability, are to be handled by existing U.S. forces in the region, pre-positioned equipment available to mobile forces, and with the cooperation of allies in the region. All these elements are products of the cold war years, made relatively less certain and reliable by the post-cold war era.

If the United States and Soviet Union, or its successor, actually redefine the Asian cold war totally out of existence, some rationales for U.S. and allied forces being located where they are in the Pacific region, and their existing tasks, would be dissipated. Furthermore, efforts at arms control and tension reduction within Asia (i.e., between the two Koreas and China-Taiwan) also could change the ground rules. Equally important, the expectations of Asian friends and allies about how they might be expected to cooperate with the United States (never a dependable variable even at the height of the cold war) is made more uncertain by the rapidly changing international environment. As a consequence, future American decisions about force structure, deployments, basing requirements, and command arrangements should be predicated on evolutionary reality in the Asia-Pacific region -- not on anachronistic or static perceptions. American officials clearly think they are moving in that direction now, but -- to the extent they are -- they are being hampered by remnants of the cold war and foot dragging by Americans on the scene in Asia.

Certain issues will be relatively narrow in their focus on the American defense bureaucracy such as the size and scope of a revamped U.S. Pacific Command, or -- even more narrowly -- how the unique U.S. Army command linkages from Korea to Washington will be adapted to the future shape of the Pacific Command. Broader issues such as the utility and availability of bases in the Philippines, Korea, and Japan, the nature of binational commands such as the Combined Forces Command in Korea, the willingness of Asian nationalists to yield to American strategic desires, and the growth of indigenous military power centers in Asia (i.e., China, Japan, and India) that might partially displace U.S. military power, collectively will shape whatever post-cold war Asia that evolves from assertive U.S. and Soviet efforts to end completely Asia's cold war. Perhaps most important, these factors will raise serious questions about the long-term viability of existing U.S. security treaties in the region. The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, in particular, will be subjected to pressure to adapt to the new circumstances.

Post-Cold War Prospects

The United States and the Soviet Union must also mesh this still uncertain process with the reality that the end of Asia's cold war will remove the veneer of superpower constraints on longstanding underlying regional tensions, as happened in Europe. Removal of the geopolitical cork from the Asian strategic bottle may be more acute than comparable European developments because Asia's internal differences throughout the postwar period have remained more diverse than Europe's. Furthermore, if Europeans are anxious

about adjusting to the U.S. strategic approach to their part of the world, and are nervously trying to discourage Americans from reducing their armed presence in Europe below the two divisions to be retained within NATO, one can imagine the consternation Asian leaders will experience over the next few years if the new planning strategy's impact is felt as acutely in the Pacific as in Europe. The post-cold war Asia-Pacific region will be both more complex strategically and less well positioned than Europe to foster a political surrogate for former military institutions. The lack of a NATO-like structure in the Asia-Pacific area prohibits the relatively simple conversion process envisaged by Europeans. This difference between the regions is compounded by the momentum toward enhanced EC unity after 1992, which may eventually absorb Eastern Europe and Russia. This would mitigate the underlying European tensions exposed by the removal of NATO-Warsaw Pact constraints. The Asianization of Asia's regional security likely to emerge in its post-cold war era holds little promise of unity of purpose or shared aspirations.

On balance, however, the resurfacing of endemic regional tensions in Asia may be inevitable and ultimately healthy. Its prospect is no reason to perpetuate an artificial cold war environment to prevent unleashing repressed dynamics. The argument which some Americans make, that the U.S. must remain as a stabilizing force to prevent excessively powerful Asian states from disrupting the equilibrium, is a relic of the cold war. There is no need for the U.S. to be a policeman for the region, self-appointed or elected by default. Asian-Pacific dynamics should be unleashed to be

dealt with by regional actors. As this occurs, moreover, all concerned -- but especially the United States and whatever remains of the Soviet Union -- should reconsider whether cold war era alliances, overtaken by events, still make sense for post-cold war states. They could be retained intact if Washington or Moscow want to maintain a commitment to a given Asian country to defend it against its aggressive neighbors, for reasons that have nothing to do with the cold war motives which led to the original commitments. Those motives were made obsolescent by the end of the superpower cold war and by the resurfacing of regional tensions among states capable of dealing with each other without external assistance. The United States and the Soviet Union will be free to retain existing bilateral security relationships in the region, if they can devise political rationales palatable to their respective publics. Similarly, each may wish to play a stabilizing role in the region's security. American officials often speak of doing so in the form of a so-called "balance wheel" for Asian security.[38] In the American case, pursuing this option is likely to be rough where Asian economic power and political nationalism are on the rise.

In the post-cold war era there are substantial reasons why such increasingly anachronistic bilateral and regional arrangements should be reconsidered by American and Soviet/Russian decisionmakers. Applying the new U.S. planning strategy to the Asian-Pacific region as thoroughly as it is to Europe would facilitate such reappraisals, based on post-cold war U.S. interests in the area. This does not imply that either the United States or the Soviet Union/Russian Republic are likely soon to forego their status as

Pacific powers. American leaders note frequently that the United States intends to maintain a presence in Pacific affairs regardless of the Soviet Union's role. The same view is as legitimately expressed by Soviet and Russian leaders. Both the United States and the Soviet Union, or the Russian Republic, are Pacific states with valid national interests in the region and are likely to remain major factors long after the Asian cold war has utterly melted. If the total dissolution of the Soviet Union actually occurs, the Rusian Republic would remain as a key actor in Pacific security affairs. However, both countries are likely to be sharply constrained post-cold war powers in a dramatically altered strategic context. Their adjustment to the new context promises significant changes in the ways they pursue their interests, with greater emphasis on economic issues than on the military issues which dominated the cold war years. As this unfolds throughout the 1990s, Asia, too, must adjust to, and help shape, the new world order.

In this context the new U.S. strategic approach can, and should, be as vigorously applied to Asia as to Europe. Asia like Europe epitomizes the new security environment that the revamped American planning strategy is designed to address: a dramatically diminished Soviet/Russian threat; far less prominent regional military threats which economically powerful local allies are competent to handle despite minimal or no U.S. assistance; and -- most important -- growing regional economic 'threats' which are a direct challenge to post-cold war U.S. national interests. Consequently, applying the new U.S. planning strategy to Asia as thoroughly as it is being applied to Europe should not be avoided by

Americans for archaic, cold war vintage reasons. Though Asian security partners of the United States are no more likely than its European partners to welcome the dramatic shift in American strategic priorities, that should not deter Americans from applying the new strategy to both major regions in a spirit of parity. It is time to apply the new strategy universally, and move on to a more innovative U.S. policy for Asia that is capable of redressing the many economic issues which confront Americans in the region.

Post-Cold War Issues

As the United States confronts the post-cold war era in Asia, Washington also will be confronted with four key issues which raise questions about how best to utilize the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. At the same time as the post-cold war era sharply reduces (and perhaps eliminates) the United States' ideological reasons for being committed to the defense of various allies and to sustaining an environment of freedom in which anti-communist states can flourish, Americans also will have to come to terms with the ways in which cold war era allies have transformed themselves into economic competitors whose rivalry with the United States will shape the nature of the post-cold war years.[39] This transformation already is helping to change the geopolitical framework of the victorious Western camp of the former cold war.

Trading Blocs The prospective emergence of trading blocs in the European Community (EC) post-1992 and in the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is a defensive mechanism for coping with the economic challenges posed by Asian-Pacific

states. In turn, the economic leaders of Asia nervously perceive the EC and NAFTA groupings as potential exclusionary devices which should motivate Asians to consider creating their own forms of regional economic groupings.[40] This is a profound development which could shake the foundation of U.S.-guided security systems in the Asia-Pacific region to their roots. After all, one must question the willingness of the American people and the U.S. Congress to provide (and pay for) the lion's share of the wherewithal for Western Pacific security and stability if they primarily serve the interests of a rival trading bloc. Whether or not such trading blocs reach full fruition remains to be seen. In either event, three other trends also are evident.

Asian Power Centers Due partly to Asian perceptions that the United States is retrenching in the Western Pacific, but mainly because of increased Asian nationalism, confidence, and pride, the Asia-Pacific region is witnessing the growth of indigenous centers of power. China, Japan, and India are enroute to reasserting their traditional preeminence that had been temporarily overshadowed by the United States' disproportionate clout in the post-Second World War/cold war years.

China and India remain today what they long have been: huge centers of relatively autonomous civilization. Their existence defines and helps shape what are known as the Sinic and Indic cultural realms. In these terms they remain cultural poles in the contemporary world. Building upon that legacy of greatness, however, both China and India are bent upon reviving the political, economic, and military influence they formerly wielded. Though

each has a long road ahead of it, both possess certitude about the historical inevitability of their cyclical return to power. The domination of Western powers over the past century and a half is not a unique phenomenon. Both China and India had been subjugated by foreigners before only to rebound as strong as previously. In short, these are resilient civilizations prepared for the long haul.

In Japan's case, the resurgence of power has a shorter memory, but -- perversely -- a more acute one. Unlike the Chinese and Indians whose leaders and elders have never tasted truly great international power in their lifetimes, or the living memory of their immediate ancestors, the Japanese were at the apex of their international geopolitical power barely half a century ago. Although few Japanese today thirst for that form of power again, many in contemporary Japan do have ambitions for more international power than is possible as the junior partner of the United States. Therefore, the Japanese quest for power is qualitatively different from that of China and India. It lacks the historical transcendental qualities of the Sinic and Indic centers, but it compensates for that absence with a stress on the real economic power Japan already possesses, which makes Tokyo the natural leader of any nascent trading bloc in the region.

The key nuance for the post-cold war era that concerns both the region, and outsiders with interests in the region, is how China, India, and Japan might try to cultivate greater power and influence in the Asia-Pacific region. What combination of economic, political, and military means will they use? Which possess advantages in each sector? Which is the most ambitious; the most adventurous? In the

foreseeable future, the odds seem stacked in Japan's favor. It has the greatest human, financial, and technological advantages, and the fewest disadvantages. Japan's armed forces, especially its 'navy' (i.e., the Maritime Self-Defense Force), are significant strategic actors which are widely recognized as such in the region.[41] Moreover, despite Japan's pacifist image, there is an undercurrent of enthusiasm for things military and naval in Japanese society. This was well illustrated by the popularity of "Captain Shiro Kaieda," a Manga character whose naval exploits in The Silent Service against the U.S. Seventh Fleet, caught the Japanese masses' attention in 1990-91.[42] However, Tokyo also is the most cautious of the lot. It remembers the costs of past recklessness, fears its own potentials, and is the least certain that it has a right to be a power in the region again. In short, Japanese ambiguity hampers Tokyo's prospects. Moreover, the "foreseeable future" may be the wrong framework for analyzing Asia's potentials. It is precisely the unforeseen processes of cyclical historical patterns which reassure Chinese and Indians that their time shall come again.

Asian Arms Races These ruminations cannot directly help contemporary American policymakers make decisions about how the United States should cope with the post-cold war era in Asia. Nonetheless, they must be borne in mind as Americans react to contemporary strategic developments in Asia that are independent of the cold war. Within this third key issue, there are two major military developments that bear close watching. One concerns the three countries just assessed, and bears directly on the U.S. Navy's future presence in the Pacific and adjacent waters. Although China

and India remain today what they traditionally have been -- namely continental powers -- each also is devoting new emphasis to the naval components of its military. The People's Republic of China is determined to hold its own at sea in the region, develop a navy which will deter naval intimidation by any other power (i.e., a coastal version of freedom of the seas), and be a player in any future negotiations for regional security or arms control.[43] India's naval ambitions once appeared to be more substantial. Although it had a long way to go, India -- despite disavowals of great power ambitions -- appeared to be developing a navy capable of dominating South Asian waters and making its presence felt throughout the Indian Ocean. For New Delhi this seemed to be a way to pursue its goals of preserving non-alignment even as the post-cold war era has made alignment with superpower camps passe, preventing any outside power from exerting undue influence in regions contiguous to the ocean which bears India's name, and reasserting in a subtle way the age-old relationship that the sub-continent had with areas as diverse as Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, and East Africa. The end of the cold war exerted a subtle influence upon India's naval ambitions. Without the support of the Soviet Union internationally, with no aligned system in which to pursue non-alignment, and faced with daunting economic problems, India by mid-1991 had essentially shelved its more elaborate hopes for a significant blue water navy.[44]

Although India's ability to rival militarily the great powers of the world on their turf or seas always was judged limited at best, that is not true in its own backyard. There is every likelihood that

India, if it can cope with domestic, ethnic, and political centrifugal forces that threaten it with disunion, will be able to assert regional primacy in the coming years. This still causes some anxiety among India's immediate neighbors who are apprehensive about the scope of India's long term ambitions regarding the traditional domain of "India." Similarly, countries further afield, such as the ASEAN states and Australia, are nervous about India's long term potential should they be realized in regional circumstances in which other major powers adopt lassez faire strategic attitudes.[45]

Partly in response to these potentials, but also in response to a combination of hypothetical scenarios that include growing Chinese and Japanese military power and a (relatively) declining U.S. military presence in the Western Pacific, the post-cold war era in Asia is notable for the persistence of intra-regional arms races. This is most striking in Southeast Asia where it is picking up speed.[46] Southeast Asians sense the emergence of a power vacuum caused by lessened superpower interest in preserving the cold war military status quo which was overtaken by events. Even during the depths of the cold war, Southeast Asian states (especially within SEATO and ASEAN) sought to maintain a rough equilibrium based on East-West rivalries which would, in turn, help prevent Asian major powers (China, Japan, and India) from exerting control in the region. Changes in this calculus caused by the end of the cold war, makes the presence of Asian giants felt far more than previously. Consequently, contemporary Southeast Asian states are increasingly concerned about strategic pressures from East and South Asia.[47] This causes them to increase their preparedness militarily, politically,

and economically. Because most of these states operate in a maritime environment, they naturally include a naval buildup as part of their increased preparedness. None, however, loom large in this regard. By engaging in a build-up, however, the uneven capabilities of these states also stirs what might be considered intramural geopolitical anxieties. There is concern that one or more states in the sub-region might try to assume a leadership role. Indonesia stands out in this regard. Consequently, the emerging arms race also helps constrain intra-regional rivalries.

To the North, on the Korean peninsula, another arms race persists, largely as a relic of the cold war. Though it is being tempered somewhat by progress in the inter-Korean dialogue brought about by the end of the superpower cold war, it also is aggravated by other factors. There is a nascent nuclear arms race in Korea, with terrible potentials to be disruptive regionally. In another vein, the Korean arms race inadvertently creates conditions in which, were Korea to be unified, the resultant Korean state might be very heavily armed. This is a disquieting prospect for its immediate neighbors, especially Japan. In tandem with these developments, and echoing the PRC's desire to be a regional naval presence, South Korea has deviated from its continental emphasis to pursue the creation of a "blue water" navy, albeit regionally oriented. Seoul's motives are clear. It wants to be a player in any regional security arrangements the United States might contemplate, wants to prevent Japan from dominating any such arrangements, and -- more remotely -- wants to be able to deal with Asian major powers on a broad strategic front should it ever have to

go it alone strategically. Seoul thinks it requires a more formidable navy to do this.[48]

Basing Access That Korean apprehension points to the fourth of the key issues the United States faces in its post-cold war security environment in Asia. That environment is in flux. As a result of several trends: U.S. fiscal constraints, diminished U.S. anti-communist ideological motivation, and an upsurge in nationalism in most Asian-Pacific countries, the United States' continued access to forward deployed bases and transiting rights is more problematic than it ever was during the cold war years. Two events pointed the way, one political and one geophysical. The New Zealand Labor Party's 1985 rejection of U.S. conditions for full participation in the ANZUS pact, that produced the virtual collapse of that leg of the U.S. presence in the Pacific, was sustained by the conservative National Party upon its return to power in October 1990. During the years since 1985, the United States has been constrained in its reliance on one portion of its Pacific alliance network. While the ANZUS leg may not have been terribly important in substantive ways, the symbolism of a western, English-speaking nation deciding upon a security path which diverged from that preferred by Washington was very important indeed.[49]

It sent signals throughout the Asia-Pacific region that American policy could be challenged with relative impunity. In the wake of the cold war, with greatly reduced threats, the Kiwis' actions have assumed new significance because they appear to have been presciently ahead of the times. There is little doubt that influential figures in countries like Japan, Korea, and the ASEAN

states now find the notion of nuclear-free zones of growing appeal. Were, for example, the two Koreas to agree upon arms control or confidence building programs that include nuclear-free steps, the ramifications for U.S. basing right there would be significant unless Washington changes its 'neither confirm nor deny' policy. So, too, would the impact of a Korean nuclear-free decision on Japan's vaunted "three non-nuclear principles" be tremendous. Tokyo probably could not withstand the pressures such cumulative developments would have upon Japan to put genuine teeth into those principles. This, in turn, would raise serious questions about the viability of U.S. bases in Japan. In these circumstances the U.S. Navy would confront in Northeast Asia roughly the same sort of constraints imposed upon its operations as it faces in New Zealand.[50]

Geophysically, it was an act of nature which nudged the United States toward a long expected basing decision in the Philippines. The explosion of Mt. Pinatubo sealed the fate of Clark Air Base. It also set the stage for political decisions within the Philippines that may amount to handwriting on the wall for Subic Bay Naval Base. The Philippine Senate's September 1991 rejection of an extension of the U.S. lease at Subic probably sealed the base's fate, barring a major reversal. On balance, however, the volcanic eruption only accelerated a process which many observers of Philippine affairs long have considered inevitable. Sooner or later, the United States would be compelled by Philippine nationalists to withdraw its bases. The cuts now may be on a schedule that neither side fully anticipated, but they are nonetheless in the offing. Volcanic eruptions are unlikely

to disrupt any other forward U.S. bases in the region, but events which were almost as unanticipated may serve the same purpose.

The best example is in Korea. Were the two Koreas to unify peacefully, perhaps as rapidly as Germany did, there is little prospect that U.S. forces would retain a valid reason to stay on the peninsula. Their removal might well be part of the package embodied by the unification process. If not, a unified Korea would have no equivalent of NATO to warrant the perpetuation of U.S. bases on the peninsula, even if Korean nationalists could tolerate them under those long awaited circumstances. In all probability, the main reason Koreans might want to retain U.S. forces there would be to protect Korea from Japan. That is a problematical proposition given the existing U.S.-Japan relationship. American bases in Japan seem more secure, but they too are subject to the vagaries of the post-cold war era. Without a clear focus on a joint Soviet threat, those bases are increasingly likely to be under the same sorts of scrutiny which has produced major drawdowns in Western Europe. That likelihood is compounded by the persistent economic frictions between the United States and Japan. Were trade blocs to become the framework for international relations by the late 1990s, the handwriting almost certainly would be on the wall for these bases too. The loss of major bases in all three allied countries would put a severe crimp in the style and capabilities of the U.S. Navy in the Pacific.[51]

Naval Consequences

In sum, therefore, the United States is faced with these four key issues which help shape the post-cold war Asia-Pacific region: 1) emergent blocs in a world of shifting trade patterns; 2) revival of

traditional centers of Asian political power; 3) the growth of various Asian military powers and arms races within the region; and 4) problematic basing conditions. These issues are generically important for the United States, but specifically relevant for the U.S. Navy as the main military instrument of U.S. power in the Pacific. Taking them in the order presented, the issue of trading blocs has tremendous implications for the U.S. Navy. The notion of an Asian trading bloc which partially or largely behaves in a protectionist manner, raises direct challenges to much that the U.S. Navy has done in the Pacific since the Second World War. Should the U.S. Navy be used to defend the commercial sea lanes of a rival trading bloc? Is the principle of freedom of the seas universally valid to the extent that American ships, personnel, and tax dollars should be used to preserve that freedom for other trading states? If the U.S. Merchant Marine does not enjoy a major reversal of its decline, to what extent should sea lanes be considered regions that Americans should protect in the name of internationally defined U.S. national interests? The answers to these questions must be offered in the post-cold war context in which anti-communist motives no longer rank so high in American strategic cost-benefit analyses. Similarly, the vaunted notion of SLOC defense is dependent on trans-Pacific free trade (or at least the quest for free trade) and on defending strategically key waterways from Soviet encroachment. The combination of a post-cold war strategic environment and a trading bloc economic environment would do severe damage to the logic behind cooperative SLOC defenses in the Western Pacific and between that region and Southwest Asia and Europe beyond it.

Equally important, albeit more abstract, the preeminence of economic factors which the prospect of trading blocs crystalize raises a profound question about the established priorities of the U.S. in Asia. Whether blocs emerge, or free trade flourishes, the United States is on the edge of an era in Asia in which military-first priorities will be considered obsolete.[52] As noted above, the United States already has begun the transition to blended priorities, but by no means has the United States returned to the policy course it once followed in which the flag followed trade. Americans clearly understand the interrelationships of commerce and security, but the United States -- despite occasional rhetoric from Washington to the contrary -- still puts defense first in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, Washington remains adamant that economic frictions must not be permitted to contaminate smooth U.S. security relations with states in the region.[53] Mounting economic priorities promise (or threaten, depending upon one's perspective) to revive older priorities in ways that would have the U.S. Navy (i.e., the "flag") follow commercial interests. Hence, the United States' economic interests would play a larger role in determining what the U.S. Navy does, and does not do, in the Pacific.

This raises a range of ways in which the U.S. Navy's role in the Pacific might be influenced. Were rival trade blocs to flourish, as noted, the U.S. Navy probably would not be tasked with providing their protection. Were Asian trade challengers, in a free trade environment, to be perceived as major economic adversaries, similar questions about the desirability of underwriting their defense costs would likely be raised thereby jettisoning the commitment to keeping

trade and security issues separate. If economic relations are mutually beneficial, but the United States is preoccupied by remaining competitive with post-cold war allies who also are commercial rivals, one can readily envision an American economic mandate which would require the U.S. Defense establishment to maintain American security through trade-offs that maximize U.S. economic gains rather than in terms of narrowly defined security. In any event, all these hypothetical yet realistic circumstances would require the U.S. Navy to be utilized in a strikingly different manner. It would become a tool of economic policy.

The reemergence of Asian centers of political, economic, and military power that would return the Asia-Pacific region to a form of normalcy that has been precluded by American dominance throughout the cold war decades would be equally significant for the U.S. Navy because it would make it abundantly clear that the Pacific is not considered by Asians to be an "American Lake." The precise distribution of Asian power would be, of course, a decisive variable. It would make a major difference whether China, Japan, or India opted for greater geopolitical stature and influence. Of the three, India presumably would be least worrisome because of its lesser potentials, recently curtailed ambitions, and because it is furthest from areas Americans are accustomed to treating as "vital." On both counts the reverse is true of China and Japan. China is a classic sleeping dragon, that most Americans would prefer to let slumber indefinitely. Nonetheless, it could become a more effective and assertive actor in world affairs. Fortunately its prospects are -- at best -- likely to remain regionally focused. Even so, a powerful,

regionally assertive China would change the strategic environment the United States has known for half a century. The most decisive changes could emanate from Japan because it has the most wherewithal. Japan also is the only one of the three traditional Asian power centers which one can readily visualize aspiring to extraregional influence. Already a global economic superpower, Japan could try to become a world class political and military power. In the latter sense, that would certainly mean expansion of its already formidable "navy" (i.e., the Maritime Self-Defense Force) into a true Navy that could rival any.

Against these scenarios, the shrinking of the portion of the Pacific which Americans could legitimately consider the United States' "lake" seems likely. In short, any serious growth of indigenous centers of geopolitical power, with attendant naval power, would recreate circumstances the likes of which the U.S. Navy has not had to deal with during the careers of any officers on active service. For most of its history in the Pacific the U.S. Navy dwelt in a maritime environment made secure by another power's forces, i.e., the Royal Navy. That changed during the 20th century, but the U.S. Navy only had to deal actively with a power balance between a solitary Asian major power versus the West for a relatively few years as Imperial Japan became more aggressive. The United States never has had to cope with multiple major indigenous Asian naval powers. It may have to in the future. Were this to happen, and large and medium size regional navies become more active in fulfilling essentially the same sorts of roles which the United States has played for years, it would require adjustments by the U.S.

Navy. The range of options would likely include: confrontation, cooperation in the form of surrogacy, nominal cooperation as junior partners, genuine cooperation as equal partners, and acceptance of a new division of areal responsibilities for Pacific security. All are conceivable in circumstances where the United States would face one or more indigenous great Asian powers. However, the "greater" these powers become, the less likely they are to tolerate the status of surrogate or junior partners. They are more likely to want to share power as approximate equals or to carve up the Pacific into areal zones of responsibilities. The latter two alternatives clearly would pose the most difficult adjustment problem for the U.S. Navy. Nonetheless, these are possibilities which cannot be ignored.

Lastly, the prospect of altered basing access in the Pacific looms as a significant constraint. This is not likely to occur in a vacuum, but in conjunction with one or more of the other alternatives. Changing economic circumstances (in Asia and/or on the home front where Congressional decisions could limit overseas bases), reduced Asian willingness to act as hosts, and reduced threat perceptions may well mean the U.S. Navy will be compelled to provide security for all or parts of the Pacific in very different conditions than in 1991. Longer logistics lines, lengthy deployments at sea, and longer response times in a crisis are presently avoided by maintaining the existing network of bases and intermittent access. To the extent such facilities are unavailable, the U.S. Navy's existing roles and missions would have to be curtailed or made more arduous to perform. Other changing circumstances may well alter the existing mix of roles and missions, thereby reducing the pressures to perform them from a smaller

network of bases. If that does not occur, or U.S. authorities decide to project force in far flung regions of the Pacific in which basing is no longer available, it will require the U.S. Navy to put up with the arduous conditions it prefers to avoid. Over a longer term, it would compel the U.S. Navy to accelerate the development of naval hardware that will allow the fleet to operate without the kind of regional support structure it has enjoyed for most of the cold war years.

Conclusion

It is clear that many factors could change for the U.S. Navy as it operates in the Pacific. Perhaps the most important question to raise in conclusion is, "Will the U.S. Navy be as important in -- and to -- the region as it has been?" The lockstep naval answer must be: "Of course, no question about it!" However, that may not be true. A balanced answer to that question depends on the ways in which the concept of seapower is treated in the future. In a sense, that issue -- in turn -- depends upon how states deal with the concept of international power. If old definitions prevail and armed force remains the bottom line of geopolitical relations between major states, then the accepted parameters of seapower also should remain intact. In that context one can, and should, argue that the U.S. Navy will remain -- at a minimum -- a key player in Pacific security affairs. Whether it remains the key player depends overwhelmingly on the variables outlined previously. The odds are strong, however, that some combination of those scenarios will lead to some diminution of the U.S. Navy's exceptionally large role. The real question is

whether the diminution will be marginal or integral. The answer to that question is largely dependent on: 1) American will to exert U.S. influence, 2) whether the need for a U.S. presence persists in the minds of Americans and Asians,[54] and 3) whether future events in the Asia-Pacific region permit the exercise of American will. In other words, it depends upon how Americans define and pursue power.

All those intertwined variables will shape the scope of U.S. Naval activities in the Pacific, but they will have little impact on the disproportionate ratio of U.S. naval power to other forms of U.S. armed force in the region. As long as the United States desires to be a military player in the Pacific, it will have no choice but to be a naval power in the area. The region's configuration does not permit external actors to be anything other than a maritime power. If anything, therefore, all those factors which suggest the United States will become less of a military presence on the ground in the Asia-Pacific area simultaneously suggest that the already large preponderance of naval power will likely shift even further in favor of the U.S. Navy. Whether the Pacific is ever again an "American lake," becomes a shared theater, or becomes a buffer between trading blocs, the United States military presence there will be naval.

On the other hand, if old definitions of international power do not prevail and the emphasis on armed force is replaced by a focus on economic leverage (as some theorists suggest), then prevailing perceptions of seapower also will require revamping. One might visualize a revival of Mahan's original thinking about seapower brought up to date by infusing an appreciation of economic power for its own sake rather than as a support for naval power and the

national goals it can sustain. This is conceivable, but stretches Mahan's theories too far. It is more appropriate that the officer corps of the U.S. Navy cultivate innovative strategists within its own ranks in the hope that it can produce an Admiral Mahan for the 21st century. Such a thinker will not come from those who reinvent the strategic wheel, have tunnel vision, are parochial in their blue suit mentality, and do not appreciate the breadth of American interests and how they change.

Just as Mahan drew some examples from the Pacific, so too might his successor learn something from the region. As one looks back upon the material covered here, there are several phases that the U.S. Navy went through. Initially it was commercially driven. It then became the flag which led the merchants during an imperial era. Next, in a period of retrenchment that followed a major war and its disillusioned aftermath, the U.S. Navy became the key defender of a neutral and isolationist America. At the same time it became an arms control pawn, useful for preserving peace through negotiations. It then became the bulwark of wartime defense of the nation and of the free world during the cold war. These phases are not meant to be comprehensive, but simply highlights. Now that events in the world seem to be leading the United States back toward a commercially motivated foreign presence, in which the U.S. Navy may again follow rather than lead merchant interests, it is worthwhile speculating about the possibility of a cyclical pattern.

Others have detected other cycles in maritime and naval history,[55] but have not focused on these phases of the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. If one observes trends in contemporary U.S. policy, many

possibilities are evident. Two stand out, however, in the context of the phases just cited. The post-cold war era was brought about by arms control and confidence building processes. Also there is an upsurge of liberal and conservative advocacy of a less interventionist and more inward-looking foreign policy. Neither of these trends seems to enjoy much favor among many contemporary U.S. Naval officers. Be that as it may, should they both become dominant themes in U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s and early 21st century, there is a real possibility that the U.S. Navy will become drawn into them also. A less interventionist United States[56] would require a strong naval buffer in the next century as much as it did during the isolationist 1920s & '30s. Similarly, although it is a taboo topic in the U.S. Navy, in any long-term emphasis on arms control in the post-cold war era it would be difficult to exclude naval arms control.[57] These are merely intriguing straws in the wind; speculation not prediction. Nonetheless, they bear watching because of the parallels they suggest. If cyclical patterns do emerge, the U.S. Navy should be prepared for them. Clearly, any future Admiral Mahan must watch for the patterns of history that will guide his grand strategic design.

NOTES

1. For an extreme example of this popular thesis, see Charles Krauthammer, "The Lonely Superpower," The New Republic, July 29, 1991, pp. 23-27.

2. For a scholarly treatment of their history, see Arthur H. Hamilton, The Clipper Ship Era. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1910 and

Helen LaGrange, Clipper Ships of America and Great Britain. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936.

3. The U.S. Navy's role in "opening" Japan is covered in William E. Griffis. Mathew Calbraith Perry: A Typical American Naval Officer. Boston: Cupples and Hurd, 1887, and Samuel E. Morrison, "Old Bruin". Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1967.

4. U.S. territorial expansion into Hawaii and American interests in the Pacific are insightfully analysed in Merze Tate's The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom; A Political History. New Havan: Yale University Press, 1965. Also see: Julius W. Pratt. Expansionists of 1898; The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959.

5. For treatment of the open door phase in U.S. policy, see Tyler Dennett. Americans in Eastern Asia: A Critical Study of the Policy of the United States With Reference to China, Japan, and Korea in the 19th Century. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

6. Late 19th century American imperial ambitions are addressed in James C. Thompson, Jr., Peter W. Stanley, and John C. Perry. Sentimental Imperialists; The American Experience in East Asia. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

7. That war's motives were analysed in Frank B. Freidel. The Splendid Little War. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958; Theodore P. Greene, American Imperialism in 1898. Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1955; and Howard W. Morgan, America's Road To Empire. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1965; See also: Richard E. Welch. Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippines-

American War, 1899-1902 . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

8. Alfred Thayer Mahan. The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1890. See also his The Problem of Asia And Its Effect Upon International Policies. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1905, originally published 1900.

9. Quoted in Allan Westcott, Editor. Mahan On Naval Warfare. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1943, p. 299. See also Mahan's "The Value of the Pacific Cruise of the United States Fleet, 1908" in Alfred Thayer Mahan. Naval Administration and Warfare. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1918, pp. 309-353.

10. For some exceptions, who try to demonstrate his contemporary relevance, see: Colin S. Gray, "Seapower and Landpower" and John Gooch, "Maritime Command: Mahan and Corbett" in Colin S. Gray and Roger W. Barnett, Editors. Seapower and Strategy. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1989.

11. For an assessment of its role in the Pacific, see Robert A. Hart. The Great White Fleet. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965, especially pages 179-264.

12. Harold and Margaret Sprout. Toward a New Order of Sea Power; American Naval Policy and The World Scene, 1918-1922. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943, pp. 104-121.

13. For details of this process, see Ibid; William R. Braisted. The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-1922. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971; and Roger Dingman. Power in the Pacific: The Origins of Naval Arms Limitation, 1914-1922. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

14. Among the best assessments of that aspect of its history are: Gilbert Cant. The Great Pacific Victory from the Solomons to Tokyo. New York: The John Day Company, 1946; Worrall R. Carter, Beans, Bullets, and Black Oil. Washington, DC: Department of Navy, 1953; John Costello, The Pacific War. New York: Rawson, Wade, 1981; and Walter G. Winslow, The Fleet The Gods Forgot: The U.S. Asiatic Fleet in World War II. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1982.

15. Sir Halford J. Mackinder. Democratic Ideals and Reality. New York: W.W. Norton, 1962 edition. For the best assessment of General Karl Haushofer's adaptive theories that influenced the Nazi era quest for lebensraum, see Andreas Dorpalen. The World of General Haushofer. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press 1966 edition of 1941 original.

16. Nicholas J. Spykman. The Geography of the Peace. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. 1944.

17. Alexander P. de Seversky. Victory Through Air Power. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1942.

18. For background on General William ("Billy") Mitchell's views, see Alfred F. Hurley. Billy Mitchell: Crusader for Air Power. New York: F. Watts, 1964, and Burke Davis. The Billy Mitchell Affair. New York: Random House, 1967.

19. Spurious arguments of that sort were made regarding Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, but they were undercut seriously (and helped to undermine U.S. policy in the region) by the manifest weakness of the idea that economic motives drove Americans into that war.

20. See, for example, the conflicting views expressed in Wilfred G. Burchett, Grasshoppers & Elephants: Why Viet Nam Fell. New York: Urizen Books, 1977; Leslie H. Gelb. The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1979; Arnold R. Isaacs. Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983; Stanley Karnow. Vietnam, The War Nobody Won. New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1983; and Harry G. Summers. On Strategy: The Vietnam War In Context. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1981.

21. For various views of "The Maritime Strategy," see Adm. James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (supplement), January 1986; Colin S. Gray, "Maritime Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, February 1986, pp. 34-42; Robert W. Komer, "Maritime Strategy vs. Coalition Defense," Foreign Affairs, Summer 1982, pp. 1124-1144; and William M. Arkin and David Chappell, "Forward Offensive Strategy: Raising the Stake in The Pacific," World Policy Journal, Summer 1985, pp. 481-500.

22. For a representative conservative evaluation of that Soviet threat, see: A. James Gregor's conservative assessment "Soviet Maritime Strategy in the Pacific," Global Affairs, Spring 1988, pp. 163-174. For more centrist evaluations see Derek da Cunha. Soviet Naval Power in the Pacific. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990 and Frank C. Langdon and Douglas A. Ross. Superpower Maritime Strategy in the Pacific. London: Routledge 1990.

23. The author addressed this shift previously in "The Maritime Strategy in the Western Pacific," Naval War College Review, Autumn, 1987, pp. 38-49.

24. It is no surprise that they were. Even the U.S. Government's best outside advisors did not seriously contemplate the prospect that the Soviet Union might self-destruct and cease to be the key threat. See, for example, Charles Wolf, et al, "Long-Term Economic and Military Trends," Rand Note N-2757-USDP, April 1989.

25. The best examples of this are the well publicized conservative views of former DOD official Frank Gaffney who regularly played a 'Cassandra' role to the more mainstream assessments.

26. For an alternative view of this topic, see Robert S. Wood, "Naval Power in the Pacific in the Post-Cold War Era" in Robert H. Puckett, Editor. The United States and Northeast Asia. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1992.

27. For a survey of the new U.S. planning strategy, see James J. Tritten, "America Promises to Come Back: The President's New National Security Strategy," Security Studies, Volume I, Number 2, Winter 1991/92, and the contributors to James J. Tritten and Paul Stockton, Editors. Reconstituting Defense: Problems in the New United States National Security Strategy. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1992.

28. For an assessment of why Asians see these issues differently, see "Why Asia is not ready for arms control," Heritage Foundation Asian Studies Center Backgrounder No. 113, May 25, 1991.

29. For coverage of those reassurances, see the Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER), December 13, 1990, pp. 25-32 and March 7, 1991, pp. 8-12.

30. Paul Kennedy. The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. New York: Random House, 1987.

31. For coverage of reluctant Asian cooperation in the Gulf War, see the Japan Times Weekly, August 27 - September 2, 1990, pp. 1 & 22, September 3-9, 1990, pp. 1& 22, and September 10-16, 1990, p. 9; U.S. News & World Report, November 26, 1990, p. 28 and February 9, 1991, pp. 45-47; and The Christian Science Monitor, June 11, 1991, p. 6.

32. See Shevardnadze's speech on "The Asia-Pacific Region -- Dialogue, Peace, Cooperation" in Vladivostok, September 4, 1990, FBIS-SOV, September 5, 1990, pp. 3-10.

33. For coverage of that trip's minor accomplishments, see the Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly, April 22, 1991, pp. 1 & 10 and 7 & 10.

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35. Colin S. Gray, The Maritime Influence of Sea Power Upon Land Power. Fairfax, VA: National Security Research, March 1987 (Department of Navy Contract No. N 00014-86-0225)

36. Department of Defense Report on Naval Arms Control, April 1991, to the Senate and House Committees on Armed Services.

37. The Washington Post (Weekly), May 27 - June 2, 1991, p.8.

38. This was initially raised by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon, The Christian Science Monitor, November 6, 1991, p. 6.

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